

THE UNDERSTUDY

by

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Registered: WGAE

March 15, 1999

INT. ROYALTON THEATER -- TITLE SEQUENCE

A wide view of the thousand seat theater. An impressive chandelier glowing over the vacant red seats.

CLICK. The chandelier is turned off.

We move down the center aisle, following a SHADOW. Unshaped, it slides in and out of darkness, floating toward the stage...

It creeps up the far wall, taking a more distinct shape of a person. CLICK. The house goes to complete darkness.

INT. BACKSTAGE AREA -- SAME

The shadow glides through the hallways of the backstage. CLICK. The stage lights go off.

Like an apparition, it momentarily disappears with each light turned off, but soon is back...

INT. REAR OF BACKSTAGE -- SAME

Moving over all kinds of PROPS, the shadow enters the area where all the LIGHTING EQUIPMENT and OLD FLATS are kept.

Goes around a corner to find a RED DOOR. The shadow moves forward, into a DRESSING ROOM. Only one light is left on. The florescent light flickering in the BATHROOM...

We move closer... Something horrible has happened--

BLOOD covers the white tiled floor. We move into a CLOSE UP of a HAND, drenched in blood.

PZZZ. The florescent light dies. Darkness...

END CREDITS.

Over black, a WOMAN is HUMMING. Sweet like a child's lullaby.

EXT. BELLEVUE HOSPITAL -- DAY

Overhead view of the FRONT COURTYARD and First Avenue. The humming gradually fades and a WOMAN'S BREATHING takes over.

Way below us a small FIGURE of a WOMAN is walking up the wet walkway to the hospital entrance. We back up to reveal--

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- SAME

We are on the fifteenth floor. The BREATHS are matched with rhythmic BEEPS emitted from a PATIENT'S life support system.

The room is still. Too still. The patient is frozen in this picture of catatonia.

INT. INTENSIVE CARE -- DAY

The elevator doors open and the same woman we just saw emerges, DOZEN WHITE ROSES in hand. In her late twenties, NINA DENEVE is a natural beauty, though she has never been one to fuss over her appearance. Hair pulled back, T-shirt and jeans are her style.

She goes to the station, trying to get a nurse's attention.

NINA

Excuse me. Miss? Excuse me. I'm here to see a patient. Marie-

NURSE

One moment.

The nurse picks up some files, running after a doctor. Nina is left there, waiting...

The nurse is taking forever. Nina notices a ROOM BREAKDOWN SHEET on the counter. She leans over, running her finger over the columns until she finds who she is looking for.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR -- DAY

Nina heads down a hallway, finally reaching ROOM 1515. Only an empty chair outside, a newspaper neatly folded on it.

She knocks lightly on the door. No answer. A MAN at the end of the hallway turns to her. But doesn't make a move.

Nina hesitates for a moment, then tries the door. It's open.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- SAME

The same room we were in earlier. On going BEEPS as she timidly puts her flowers next to a dozen others.

She is about to leave... but the sight of the patient has transfixed her.

This is MARIE. Or what used to be Marie. Bandages cover most of her face. The wounds must be massive by the layering of gauze and the stains on them. Only her eyes are visible.

Nina can't help but take a step closer to the bed, aghast.

Restraints hold down her arms, an I.V attached to Marie's HAND. Nina reaches out, touching her very softly...

NINA

I'm so sorry.

As if awoken from a deep sleep, Marie's EYES BLINK OPEN. Startled, Nina pulls back.

NINA

Marie?

Glossed over eyes desperately trying to focus, moving in every direction until they find Nina, instantly freezing.

Nina smiles awkwardly.

NINA

Hi, it's me. Nina. Nina Deneve. Remember me?

Marie starts to SCREAM. Gurgled, broken chords of terror that are heightened by the explosion of high pitched ALARMS from the life support system.

Nina almost falls backwards in confused shock as the patient continues to wail.

It only takes a few seconds before a DOCTOR and TWO NURSES burst into the room, rushing to the bedside.

DOCTOR

What happened?!

NINA

Nothing. I-I-I-

NURSE

You're not suppose to be in here!

Nina bolts out the door as they attend to the crisis.

INT. CORRIDOR -- SAME

The howls follow Nina as she scurries away, hand over mouth in horror. A MAN in a rumpled suit catches up.

MAN

One second.

Nina turns to find him flashing a BADGE.

INT. ICU WAITING ROOM -- DAY

The DETECTIVE hands a cup of water to the shaken Nina.

DETECTIVE
Here, drink this.

NINA
Thank you.

He waits patiently as she takes a few sips.

DETECTIVE
So, you know Marie.

NINA
Yes.

DETECTIVE
From where?

NINA
From the theater.

DETECTIVE
From the Royalton production? Or from before?

NINA
Yes. The Royalton. How did you know?

DETECTIVE
I was there today. You part of...
(flips through notebook)
"Last Night Nightingale"?

NINA
Uh huh. I'm the understudy. Marie's understudy.

DETECTIVE
Are you the only understudy?

NINA
No. I mean, yes. I'm Marie's understudy.
But there are other understudies... for
the other leads. Is she going to be okay?

DETECTIVE
Mmm. No idea. Not a doctor.

NINA

God, it's so horrible. She looks so...

DETECTIVE

Any ideas how this happened?

NINA

Me? No.

DETECTIVE

None?

NINA

I'm not even sure what happened. I mean, I just heard. So I came over. Just wanted to give her flowers. That's all. Some flowers.

DETECTIVE

Was she depressed, or do you know of any other reasons why she would do this?

NINA

Why... she would do this? What do you mean? Wasn't she attacked?

DETECTIVE

Maybe. We're still investigating.

NINA

No, you just said-

DETECTIVE

It's a possibility, that's all. It's also possible someone made it look like it was self-inflicted.

NINA

Oh my God.

DETECTIVE

Sorry.

NINA

I can't believe that. No.

DETECTIVE

She have enemies? Things of that sort.

NINA

I don't know. I really didn't know her that well. I only saw her a few times and we never really talked. But I really

(MORE)

NINA (cont'd)
liked her. And- I mean, she knew who I was.

DETECTIVE
Okay. Fine. Thanks for your time.

Nina seems to be miles away, nodding. She takes out a PRESCRIPTION BOTTLE and a BLUE PILL. Swallows it with the remaining water.

NINA
For my allergies.

The detective gives her a look that says "I wasn't asking."

DETECTIVE
Here's my card. Detective Chavez. Think of anything, give me a call.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

There is Marie, fallen silent again. Even the NURSE sitting in the corner looks frozen. We move to the window, an overhead shot of

THE COURTYARD

Way below us Nina exits the building, pulling her coat tight against the dampness as she walks away.

EXT. WEST 128TH STREET -- AFTERNOON

This part of the Upper West Side had once been one of the richest in architectural splendor. But that is decades past. Now there is graffiti and all the doormen are gone.

Nina climbs the stairs to her Gothic-style building.

INT. NINA'S LOBBY -- SAME

The vast lobby with huge pillars dwarfs Nina as she strolls to her first floor apartment.

INT. NINA'S APARTMENT -- SAME

For Manhattan this is a mansion. The ceilings are eighteen foot and the open doorways seem to loom over the sparse rooms. But the oak and dark carpet reeks of old. The curtains are too heavy and what little light does get in only highlights the dust.

Nina is about to drop her bag when she realizes that the table which was usually in the parlor is gone. The only hint

of its past existence is the darker color of the carpet where it must have stood forever.

NINA
(calls out)
Parushka.

Nothing. So she heads down the wide hallway to the bedrooms. The walls are lined with family photographs.

NINA
Parushka... What happened to the table?

NINA'S BEDROOM

Tosses her coat on the bed. The room is still decorated from when she was a little girl. Flowery wallpaper that is faded and beginning to peel, shag carpet and an oversized bed.

She goes back to the hall, searching.

NINA
Parushka?

Opens another door to find an EMPTY ROOM. Completely empty.

Nina goes to the next door. Knocks.

NINA
Hey. You in there?

She opens it up to reveal a room that is immaculate, with beautiful furnishings. But Parushka is not there.

Nina goes to the LAST BEDROOM. Reaches for the doorknob... But something stops her. She turns back down the hallway.

NINA
Parushka!

INT. LIVING ROOM / DINING ROOM -- SAME

As Nina makes her way to the back of the apartment we realize by the marks on the carpet that they have been slowly selling off the furniture.

INT. KITCHEN -- SAME

The kitchen used to be beautiful but it doesn't get much use now. The sink has a constant DRIP to it.

Nina finds a pot on the stove that is hissing fiercely. She quickly turns off the fire.

A few DOLLAR BILLS are on the table. A count finds exactly nine bucks.

Nina is startled when PARUSHKA appears behind her. A servant probably every day of her seventy years, Parushka has a worn face that goes along with her hunched back.

PARUSHKA

That's all that's left, Miss Nina.

NINA

The table in the parlor...

PARUSHKA

I sold it, Miss Nina. Paid the electric bill and the telephone and the maintenance and that's all that's left.

NINA

That was my mother's table.

PARUSHKA

Your mother no longer is here.

NINA

I know that. I'm just saying that she loved that table.

PARUSHKA

Do you want your dinner now, Miss Nina?

NINA

Parushka. Listen. You can't-

PARUSHKA

A nice lamb stew.

NINA

Listen!

PARUSHKA

I'm sorry. I'm listening.

NINA

Okay. It's just that... I would appreciate if you consulted me first on selling my mother's furniture.

PARUSHKA

Of course. I understand, Miss Nina. But bills are bills. That's all. You must believe me on that. I know.

NINA
I know that too.

PARUSHKA
Do you? Oh, I know you do. What am I talking about?

NINA
And I'm trying. I know it's not much now, but maybe soon... I'm trying.

Nina sits as Parushka pours a bowl of stew for her.

PARUSHKA
You know I was with your mother since she was a young woman. And this was her favorite. Try it, try it. Table sold, you eat.

NINA
Just don't sell anything else. Okay?

PARUSHKA
Yes, Miss Nina.

A steaming spoon full of stew makes Nina cringe.

PARUSHKA
By the way, that theater called.

NINA
What- When? What did they say?

PARUSHKA
Let me see... They said something about wanting you to go to the theater tonight.

NINA
Tonight? Why? Did they say why?

PARUSHKA
No. I don't think so.

Nina jumps up from the table, hurrying out of the kitchen.

NINA
Why didn't you tell me?!

PARUSHKA
I just did. Miss Nina, your dinner-

NINA
I can't eat now. I'm going to be late. Oh
God, I'm going to be late! Where's my
jacket? Where did I- Forget it.

Nina leaves the apartment, slamming the door behind her.

EXT. ROYALTON THEATER -- NIGHT

A classical Off-Broadway theater with the marquee lights
turned off. The bold letters read: "Last Night Nightingale".

Nina practically runs up, turning into the side alley.

EXT. ALLEY, BACKSTAGE ENTRANCE -- NIGHT

Knocks on the backstage door, trying to catch her breath.
SALVATORE, the stage manager, opens up. A thin moustache and
ridiculous suit, he always has a twinkle in his eye.

SALVATORE
There she is.

NINA
Hello, Salvatore.

He lets her in.

INT. BACKSTAGE ENTRANCE -- SAME

SALVATORE
Go to the dressing room right away.

NINA
Dressing room?

SALVATORE
Yeah, Marie's room- Didn't they tell you?

NINA
Tell me what? I got a call. They said
come to the theater.

SALVATORE
Miss Deneve, they want you on tonight.

NINA
What?

KIM, the costume woman, grabs her arm.

KIM

You're here! Everyone is waiting.
Salvatore, tell Simon she's here. Tell
Harrison-

HARRISON (O.S)

I'm right here.

HARRISON, the writer, stands behind her. Fifty pounds
overweight, he lights a cigarette.

KIM

Nina's here.

HARRISON

I can see that for Christ sake.

He leads the way through the hectic BACKSTAGE AREA. CAST
MEMBERS, already in costume, glance up. CREW MEMBERS stare.

HARRISON

What took you so long?

NINA

I tried to get here as soon as I could.

HARRISON

Next time take a cab. Your hair is all
wet. We'll have to dry it.

Kim rolls her eyes, pats Nina's arm.

KIM

Everything's fine.

HARRISON

Everything is not fine. You have
exactly... five minutes and thirty
seconds before that curtain comes up.
This is a dress rehearsal, and everything
has to go exactly like it would on a show
night. That's the whole point of-

KIM

She'll be ready.

HARRISON

She better be. We have exactly-

KIM

Harrison, you're the writer.

HARRISON

What's that supposed to mean?

KIM

Just let me do my job.

SIMON CONNOLLY, the director, breaks in. He's forty-five, a handsome man whose soft spoken manner is very reassuring.

SIMON

Nina. Beautiful. You look beautiful.

(to Harrison)

Tell Mr. Wells that we'll do the dress.

(to Kim)

Get some towels and a blow dryer.

Simon puts his arm around Nina and guides her.

SIMON

How you feeling, Nina?

NINA

I'm fine.

SIMON

You heard what happened to Marie last night?

NINA

Oh, yes. It's so horrible.

He holds the dressing room door open for Nina.

INT. DRESSING ROOM -- SAME

Sits her down, switching on the light bulbs that line the wall-to-wall mirror.

SIMON

Marie... her face is pretty messed up.

NINA

Yes. I know.

SIMON

That face of hers... It's tragic.

(pause)

But she'll be fine. In a few weeks, maybe. But we have to think about now. Now. Mr. Wells wanted to cancel tonight. Not just tonight, but the previews and the opening. He wanted to wait until we could recast someone of Marie's stature. Name recognition, you understand.

NINA

I supposed that's what you have to do.

SIMON

Maybe. Maybe we will. But everyone has put a lot of work into this and there is a certain rhythm that you get. So, I told him you were- well, your rehearsals have been excellent. I love what you've been doing and... I convinced Wells that he had to at least see one rehearsal with you before he postpones the show.

NINA

...Really?

He nods. She hugs him tightly. Embarrassingly tight.

NINA

Oh, thank you, Mr. Connolly.

SIMON

It's Simon. No "mister".

Nina's eyes light up as he smiles warmly.

NINA

Right. I'm ready. I can do it.

SIMON

It's only a dress rehearsal. Don't be nervous.

NINA

I'm not. I'm ready, Simon. I am.

SIMON

I believe you. Break a leg, huh?

He leaves the room by blowing a kiss at her.

Nina stares at herself in mirror. A smile growing...

A RED VELVET DRESS hangs on a rack behind her. She goes to it, letting her fingertips run over the soft surface.

KIM (O.S)

That's not yours.

Kim has another dress, towels and blow dryer in hand.

KIM
Come on, lets get you ready.

TIME CUT:

Kim is helping Niña slip into the velvet dress.

KIM
Can you imagine? I heard she has more than twenty cuts. And not just her face. All over. She almost died she was bleeding so much. Blood all over the bathroom. Can you believe it?

NINA
The bathroom?

KIM
Yeah, right there. Found her last night after the show. I don't care what the police say, I knew her and there is no way she did it to herself. That's just not right.

NINA
...I know.

KIM
Some maniac must have gotten in. This city... Fucking crazy people everywhere. Even here we're not safe. It scares me, you know, to think there was some crazy serial killer with a knife in this room. In this room. It's like a nightmare.

Nina can only nod.

TIME CUT:

Kim is applying the last touches of make-up.

KIM
There. You look stunning.

In her costume, hair sculptured perfectly, an amazing metamorphosis is complete. Nina just stares, like she doesn't recognize herself.

KIM
It's funny, with the dress and make-up you sorta look like her.

NINA
I don't see it.

KIM
Any case, you look beautiful. We'll leave
you alone. Take a moment to breathe.
You'll be great, honey.

Kim leaves. Nina stands up, trying to look pleased.

INT. BATHROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Standing in the bathroom, Nina nervously looks around.
Notices a few STAINS on the tiled floor. She leans in for a
closer look...

It might be anything. But maybe it's blood.

Nina spins around, overtaken by nausea. Falling to her knees
in front of the toilet, she VOMITS.

INT. BACKSTAGE -- MOMENTS LATER

Nina exits her dressing room with queasy steps. It looks like
she might be overtaken at any moment.

Salvatore spots her, rushes back to his post. JOHN, the lead
actor, smiles at her nervousness.

JOHN
This is a first, huh? Meeting my leading
lady right before dress rehearsal. Are
you okay?

Nina nods, attempting a smile.

JOHN
I'm John.

NINA
Yes, I know. We met... before.

The BACKSTAGE LIGHTS FLASH. Salvatore's voice booms through
an INTERCOM.

SALVATORE (O.S.)
One minute. One - minute to curtain.

JOHN
See you on stage.

John heads through the set. A couple other ACTORS make their
way onto stage, sneaking glances at Nina. She lowers her eyes
and heads behind the set where she is all alone.

CUT TO:

Nina peeks through the curtain. Only three audience members for this performance. SIMON and HARRISON sit together. They are joined by a silver-haired gentleman in a tailored suit. This is HENRY WELLS, the producer.

SALVATORE (O.S)

(on intercom)

Thirty seconds. Thirty - seconds to curtain.

Nina paces behind the set, dying of nerves. The backstage lights go off. The stage lights come up.

She peeks through a slit on the set. The ACTORS on stage are frozen like mannequins...

The CURTAIN RISES.

The performance begins. The actors delivering their lines...

Nina slowly heads to the doorway, her entrance point. The performance goes on, the voices fading as we move into a

CLOSE UP of NINA

Her whole body goes through a transformation. Her heartbeat seems to slow as she slips into character. We are seeing a different Nina emerge... She's ready.

It's her cue. She opens the set door and steps onto stage. The BLINDING STAGE LIGHTS crash onto her--

FADE TO:

A PAIR OF HANDS.

INT. DRESSING ROOM -- MUCH LATER

In her street clothes, Nina covers her face. Finally she removes her hands. She seems disappointed with herself.

There is a KNOCK at the door.

NINA

Comin'.

She takes a second, gathering courage. Opens the door.

SALVATORE

Sorry to disturb, Miss Deneve. Everyone is gone. I'm closing up.

NINA

Oh, yes, of course. I'm sorry. Let me just get my bag.

INT. BACKSTAGE AREA -- MOMENTS LATER

Salvatore locks the dressing room door.

SALVATORE

I have to say, Miss Deneve, you were spectacular tonight.

NINA

Really? You think so?

SALVATORE

(whispers)

Better than Marie.

NINA

Oh, I don't know.

SALVATORE

I've been around. I've seen performances. And I say bravo.

NINA

Wow. I don't know what to say to that.

SALVATORE

Nothing to say. Just give me a second, I'll let you out.

He walks down the hallway, shutting off lights. Nina drifts to the stage.

INT. STAGE -- SAME

Nina stands on stage, gazing out at the VACANT SEATS...

The house lights suddenly go off. Nina snaps out of it and walks off to the wing.

INT. BACKSTAGE ENTRANCE -- SAME

SALVATORE

Good night.

NINA

Thank you, Salvatore. Have a good night.

He closes the door and Nina heads up the alley.

EXT. ROYALTON THEATER -- NIGHT

She strolls past the entrance of the theater. The lobby lights shut off as she walks away.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE -- NIGHT

There is a slight drizzle, the sidewalks reflecting the myriad of lights that flash in every direction. Nina walks through the streets, oblivious to the weather.

Slowly a feeling comes over her... Sensing that someone is following her. She looks behind her--

The streets are crowded, everyone seems to be in a hurry. She keeps going... but can't help looking back again.

Maybe it's nothing. It's too crowded and she can't see anything but a steady flow of PEOPLE.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE UP of CARBONATION BUBBLES.

INT. KITCHEN, NINA'S APARTMENT -- VERY LATE

At the bottom of a GLASS is a BLUE PILL, dissolving, spewing out bubbles.

Nina sits at the table, buried in her SCRIPT. In a robe, towel around her head. Takes a spoon and stirs her drink.

Scribbling a few FURIOUS NOTES on the margins, thinking... Takes a sip--

There is a KNOCK at her door. Nina looks up, surprised.

The GRANDFATHER CLOCK in the living room strikes midnight as Nina heads to the door through the eerily dark apartment.

NINA

Who is it?

THROUGH THE PEEPHOLE: No one is there.

Nina opens the door and peers out. The LOBBY is EMPTY. But we hear the clank of the outer door closing--

A SHADOW disappearing out the foyer.

Then she notices that there is a PACKAGE WRAPPED in NEWSPAPER at her feet. She quickly picks it up and slips back inside.

She heads to the living room, slowly unwrapping the surprise delivery...

It's a KNIFE of the butcher variety. Large, thick and with a scratched up wooden handle.

There is also a scribbled NOTE. It reads: "FOR YOU."

Nina just stares at the knife. Not a clue where it came from. Picks it up to inspect it more carefully...

And to her shock she realizes that there is DRIED BLOOD on it. Almost at the same instant she realizes that she has just put her fingerprints on the handle.

She desperately rubs the newspaper around the knife handle, it smudges and some of the dried blood rubs off.

INT. KITCHEN -- MOMENTS LATER

Nina washes the knife and then dries it, careful not to make the same mistake and touch it. Wraps it back into the crumpled newspaper.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- SAME

Nina has no idea what to do with this thing. Decides to hide it. Looking around the living room for the perfect place...

Opens up the case to the GRANDFATHER CLOCK. Lays the knife at the bottom, beneath the pendulum...

The FLOOR CREAKS in the dining room. She spins, snapping the clock closed. And just sits there, crouched...

Another CREAKING sound. Someone is moving around her place.

NINA

Parushka?

A SHADOW moves at the end of the hallway, disappearing around the corner. Nina jumps up.

NINA

Parushka?

No response.

Nina reaches around the corner and snaps on the hallway light. She breathlessly peers in... No one.

She moves cautiously through the hallway.

NINA

Stop sneaking around. I can hear you.

She hesitates for a moment, noticing something at the end of the hallway. We see through the bottom of the last door that the LIGHT IS ON. SOMEONE moves past the light.

Nina heads straight for the door.

NINA

Parushka... Answer me, Parushka.

Nothing. So she swings the door open--

INT. ROOM -- SAME

This was her PARENT'S BEDROOM. It was kept intact. Excessive wardrobe still hangs in closet. Personal items out.

But no one is in here.

Confused, she takes a few steps in, looking around. Then, out of the corner of her eye--

SOMEONE is in the room with her! She spins, SCREAMS.

But it is only HER REFLECTION in a FULL LENGTH MIRROR.

Nina looks at herself in the mirror, lowering her hand from her mouth, heart beating fast. She sighs. Then--

HER REFLECTION MOVES! With a slight smile on its lips, the reflection raises its hand in greeting--

PARUSHKA (O.S)

Why you screaming?

Parushka is in the doorway, groggy with sleep. Nina is speechless. She turns back to the mirror and... points. The mirror is acting as it should, reflecting her movements.

PARUSHKA

Why are all the lights turned on? What are you doing in your parents room?

NINA

There was- I thought... someone-

PARUSHKA

It's three in the morning, Miss Nina. You're sleepwalking again. Go back to bed. I, for one, need my beauty sleep. So do you, if I may say so.

She pulls Nina out of the room, shutting off the light.

VOICE (O.S)

Nina Deneve! What did you do?!

INT. CORNER OFFICE, 6TH AVENUE -- DAY

The rough voice belongs to LAWRENCE, Nina's agent. Sixty, loud and very much a queen.

LAWRENCE

What did you do on that stage?

NINA

What? What did they say?

LAWRENCE

They loved you. Absolutely loved you.

NINA

They did?

LAWRENCE

Yes, sweetheart! Sit, sit. In fact, Simon was raving on and on about you.

NINA

That's nice.

LAWRENCE

Better than nice, sugar and spice. They want you to take over.

NINA

...You're kidding.

LAWRENCE

No! I'm not kidding! This is such a great role for you, my little serious duckling. This is absolutely a splendid role for you. To show off your talents.

NINA

The show is going to open.

LAWRENCE

With you in the lead, sweetheart. Before you know it you'll be a star. I'm telling you. You're my girl. You're so talented and so... beautiful. Look at you. You look absolutely radiant. Are you in love?

NINA

No, no.

LAWRENCE

I can tell you are. I know these things. This is huge, absolutely magnificent. See, what did I tell you all these years? Just be patient, you have the talent. All those understudy roles and now...

NINA

Thank you so much, Lawrence.

LAWRENCE

I didn't do a thing. It's all you. Now, I'm setting up your deal memo. Everything's set, don't worry. Let me see...

(looks through papers)

Previews on "Nightingale" start... next week! Opening night two weeks away. Whew. Gotta jump in there. You ready, honey?

NINA

I'm ready.

LAWRENCE

Beautiful. Now, one thing. Henry Wells called me and he needs a clean bill of health from you. For insurance purposes. The one I sent him is outdated. He gave me the address of a doctor.

NINA

Oh, I have my own doctor.

LAWRENCE

You do? Okay, great. Get it done soon.

Lawrence's phone buzzes. He picks it up, listening.

LAWRENCE

(into phone)

Tell him to hold for one sec. I'm with my favorite client.

(to Nina)

Sorry, love. I've got to take this call. But thanks so much for coming by.

NINA

Okay... I was hoping- I just needed to talk to you about, uh...

LAWRENCE
About what?

NINA
I haven't gotten any money yet. I was wondering when I could get my check. There's no hurry, but I was just wondering.

LAWRENCE
They haven't sent anything to you?

NINA
No. Nothing.

LAWRENCE
(into speaker phone)
David, find out what's keeping accounting from cutting the check for "Nightingale."
(to Nina)
There. Taken care of. Now, I want you to keep staying in love because I have never seen you so beautiful.

NINA
Thanks, Lawrence. Thanks a lot.

LAWRENCE
My pleasure, sweetheart. Bye-bye.

EXT. 6TH AVENUE BUILDING -- DAY

Nina makes her way through the revolving doors, grinning from ear to ear. She hops with joy at her new fortune.

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP of an EKG MONITOR.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Electro readings and WHEEZING BREATHS from the respirator as a NURSE leans over the PATIENT, changing the I.V.

INT. ICU WAITING ROOM -- DAY

The intensive care floor is busier than the last time we were here. Nina is talking to a nurse at the station.

The nurse refers to her chart and leaves. Nina looks around. Waiting...

Appalled as she sees TWO ORDERLIES pushing a stretcher that has a DEAD BODY on it, covered in a white sheet.

VOICE (O.S)

Are you a relative?

A DOCTOR is next to Nina, writing on charts as he talks.

NINA

Excuse me?

DOCTOR

Are you a relative of Marie?

NINA

No. I'm a, uh, friend. I wanted to check up on her. Say hello. I was here before.

DOCTOR

Sorry, but we can't allow any visitors at this time. Maybe next week.

NINA

Oh. She's still that bad?

DOCTOR

Afraid so. Still in critical condition.

NINA

Just from... those cuts?

DOCTOR

It's the massive internal damage she received from the entry wound below the sternum that's giving her trouble.

NINA

That's so awful.

DOCTOR

Yes, it is. Call us next week, we'll let you know if you can see her. Now, if you'll excuse me-

NINA

Doctor- Is she... is she talking?

DOCTOR

Talking?

(pauses, frowning)

You don't know? She's fallen into a coma.

Nina stares at the doctor, incredulous.

NINA

Coma?

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- SAME

Marie's LIFE SUPPORT READINGS are steady, monotonous. We move in, peeking through a narrow opening in the curtain that encircles the bed...

But all we can see is Marie's motionless HAND.

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP of a CHAMPAGNE GLASS, being filled up--

INT. WELLS' PENTHOUSE -- NIGHT

The ENTIRE THEATER COMPANY in gathered in the luxurious apartment. Nina is spinning from all the energy around her, taking it in like a girl at her first party.

She makes her way through the crowd, trying to not spill her two drinks. Mr. Wells hushes everyone.

WELLS

Thank you, thank you... My dear friends and colleagues... I love to give toasts. But I'm going to surprise the shit out of all of you and keep my speech brief.

(laughter and claps)

It's my great pleasure to have you here tonight. I think these are the moments in life that we live for. When all your hard work, all your sweat is about to pay off. When all the struggle and pain that you have invested is suspended and you stand on the edge of the cliff ready to jump off. Faith in yourself and your fellow artists is all you have-

HARRISON

Give me a parachute, please!

WELLS

No, no. No parachutes, Harrison. We don't need them.

Nina has maneuvered to where Simon is, handing him a drink.

WELLS

We've put together a good show. In a few days we start previews. Usually it's a time of chaos. And we had our scare, didn't we? I know we'll all miss Marie very much. It's a tragedy that this happened and we'll pray for her recovery. But I am also happy that we will go on as scheduled with the lovely Nina in her place. Nina...

Everyone claps. Nina blushes, not sure how to react.

SIMON

(whispers in her ear)

I'll toast to that.

She's trying her best to keep a smile going, but out of desperation she downs her entire drink.

WELLS

I'm proud of all of you. Everyone has stepped up. I say to you, I know you can fly. I've seen it and we're now ready to show the audience. Good luck. Cheers.

Everyone returns the salutation.

INT. FOYER / PENTHOUSE -- LATER

The party is over, the CAST piling into the elevator. Nina is a few steps behind, putting on her coat.

JOHN

Come on, got room for more.

Nina gets into the crowded elevator, squeezing up to Simon.

EXT. PARK AVENUE BUILDING -- NIGHT

The group files out, dispersing with rowdy good-bye's. A DOORMAN waves down another cab.

An awkward silence as Nina and Simon stand on the sidewalk.

NINA

Well. That was fun.

SIMON

Why don't we go out? Go to a bar, or something.

NINA
I don't really drink. And that
champagne...

SIMON
Oh. Okay. Want to share a cab? I'm
heading downtown-

NINA
I'm across the park.

SIMON
Okay.

NINA
I would like to. Really. But- I should
get home.

SIMON
We'll do it another time. Fortunately, I
get to see you every day.
(hands her his umbrella)
Here. Just in case it starts again.

NINA
I don't need it. I'll take a cab-

SIMON
Just take it.
(kisses her on cheek)
You saved the show, Nina.

He jumps in the cab. As soon as he is out of sight Nina opens
her PURSE. Only got a couple of dollars left.

DOORMAN
Shall I get you a cab, Ma'am?

NINA
No. That's okay.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE / 96TH STREET -- NIGHT

Nina is strolling along, HUMMING a TUNE. A light rain coming
down as she crosses the street towards Central Park.

She hesitates a moment at the entrance, but seeing a COP CAR
on the corner she decides to go in.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK -- NIGHT

Nina keeps a leisurely pace on the picturesque path. The soft
glow of the lampposts leads the way as she keeps HUMMING.

LEAFS RUSTLE and a lamppost is flickering as she passes. Then the light suddenly goes out.

Nina picks up her pace as the path suddenly seems to be unnaturally quiet and empty.

She stops humming when she hears FOOTSTEPS behind her. She turns, but can see no one approaching. She picks up her pace even more.

The FOOTSTEPS match her speed. A SHADOW flashes past a tree.

The uneasy feeling which has crept up is now full blown fear. She stops in her tracks. The footsteps also stop. She moves on. They follow.

The SHADOW hovers on the path, the source still hidden. Then it darts back into the darkness.

Nina is trying not to panic and run, but she's being followed and she can't find who it is behind her. The FOOTSTEPS ARE GETTING CLOSER--

Then it's another sound, very strange, very high pitched--

A BIKER almost runs her over. TIRES SQUEALING on the wet pavement as he disappears into the night.

The footsteps have stopped. It's DEAD QUIET. Nina can't take it anymore. She RUNS.

EXT. 97TH ST. TRANSVERSE -- NIGHT

This two-way street is for cross-town traffic, not pedestrians. But Nina has made her way onto the narrow sidewalk, an occasional CAR whizzing by.

She is approaching a STONE BRIDGE that hangs over the road. There is a FIGURE with an umbrella on the opposite side, heading in her direction. It's difficult to see who it is.

A car drives past Nina and the HEADLIGHTS illuminate a WOMAN. She is walking at a swift pace.

Nina keeps going. A car heads toward her, its headlights blind her for a moment. When she recovers she is almost under the bridge, the woman across from her...

They are both crossing under the bridge at the same time when another car passes, lighting up the area--

In that brief flash we see that the woman is NINA'S DOUBLE.

Nina turns sharply, almost shrieking aloud, but her breath is taken away. She wants to say something but can't.

The stranger has kept walking, oblivious to Nina's shock. She steps on the other side of the bridge, out of the darkness.

Nina takes a few steps in her direction, totally unsure of what she saw. Finally she takes a breath--

NINA

Excuse me.

The stranger stops and turns. The shadow of her umbrella masking her face. But then another car approaches, its headlights slowly bringing light...

Brighter and brighter until Nina can see her EXACT REPLICA. They stare at each other.

THE DOUBLE is Nina and yet, at the same time, a completely different Nina. The Double has shorter hair and is dressed much more stylishly.

But it's not just hair and clothes that separate them, it is the different attitude. The Double has a look of impatience as Nina struggles to open her mouth.

NINA

S-s-sorry. My mistake.

The Double turns in annoyed silence and hurries away. Nina watches her disappear into the night, almost too weak to stand.

EXT. WEST 128TH STREET -- NIGHT

Nina rushes up her street and into her building.

INT. LOBBY -- SAME

She breathlessly hurries to her apartment and enters the safety of her place.

INT. APARTMENT -- SAME

Nina knocks on Parushka's door. No answer. She carefully opens the door and tiptoes in. Parushka is asleep.

NINA

Parushka. Hey. Parushka.

The servant shifts in her sleep as Nina kneels down and lightly shakes her.

NINA

Wake up. I need to talk to you.

Parushka just groans, pushing Nina away.

INT. HALLWAY -- SAME

Nina silently closes the door behind her. She leans against the wall, taking a moment to breathe.

Across from her is a PHOTOGRAPH. It shows her with her PARENTS. Nina runs her hand over the frame...

NINA

It was just a dream. Just a dream...

INT. KITCHEN -- VERY LATE

Nina is burning the midnight oil at the kitchen table, writing down NOTES. Script, prescription bottle and an EMPTY GLASS by her side.

She doesn't notice that her elbow is slowly pushing the glass to the edge of the table. It finally tips--

And SHATTERS on the floor. Nina bends down, but she's too clumsy, yelping when she cuts her finger.

NINA

Damn.

Sticking her finger in her mouth, sucking on the blood, she goes back to gathering the broken glass.

EXTREME CLOSE UP of SHARDS OF GLASS. A very FAINT HEARTBEAT is heard over distorted REFLECTIONS of NINA'S FACE.

Then in SUPER-SLOW MOTION, falling BLOOD DROPS explode into beautiful, bright red ripples on the glassy surface. The HEARTBEAT is growing and growing until--

CUT TO:

NINA WAKES UP.~

INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

It's morning. Nina had fallen asleep with her head on the table. She sits up, her LOUD HEARTBEAT reverberating...

VOICE (O.S)

What are you so excited about?

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE -- DAY

CLOSE on a STETHOSCOPE as DOCTOR TAYLOR examines Nina. He's got the kindest face imaginable, with a grey beard.

DR. TAYLOR

Your heart rate is accelerated. Breathe normal. In. Out.

NINA

Okay. In. Out.

DR. TAYLOR

All these years and you still hate coming here, don't you?

Nina flinches as the stethoscope moves to her back.

DR. TAYLOR

Just a check up. No injections. No blood. Simple. Breathe. In... Out... Fine.

He removes the stethoscope and feels her underarms.

DR. TAYLOR

So... this part, this part you've got. You like it?

NINA

Yeah. It's great. I love it.

DR. TAYLOR

That's something. Really something. Good for you.

His hands continue over her body in a casual examination.

DR. TAYLOR

So, how you been feeling? Anything I should know about?

NINA

No, not really. Everything's fine.

DR. TAYLOR

That's good. You've been sleeping okay?

NINA

So-so. I feel a little... sometimes I can't sleep well.

DR. TAYLOR
You've been taking your prescription?

NINA
...Yeah.

DR. TAYLOR
Have you?

NINA
I have. But they make me... I'm worried,
Doctor. I have to be, you know, sharp.
For the show. Those pills-

DR. TAYLOR
That is what they are for, Nina. Think of
them as vitamins. Your body needs them.
They won't affect your sleep. I promise.
You will keep taking those pills. Every
day. Right?

NINA
Right.

DR. TAYLOR
Good. What's this?

On Nina's stomach there is a CUT. Just a bad scratch.

NINA
Oh. That's a cut.

DR. TAYLOR
I see that.

NINA
I accidentally- I can't even remember how
I did that. I'm always- I'm clumsy, you
know that, Doctor.

DR. TAYLOR
You should always clean and cover cuts,
Nina. No matter how small. You don't want
to get an infection.

He collects the materials to clean her wound.

DR. TAYLOR
You'll give Florence the address to where
I should send the paperwork?

NINA

Yeah, I will. They need them for the insurance. As soon as you can.

DR. TAYLOR

No problem. They should be ready in the next couple days. Now, lift your shirt and let me clean that cut.

She reluctantly does as he says.

INT. TAXI CAB -- DUSK

The Manhattan landscape rolls by against the twilight sky. Nina, sitting next to her agent, is barely able to control her happiness. Lawrence puts a gentle hand on his client.

LAWRENCE

This is it. A career moment. This is so exciting. Don't worry, everything will go great.

(Nina nods)

It's just the first preview. Everyone knows it's not supposed to be perfect yet. Just a preview. All the kinks will work out. Give me your hand, sweetheart. God, I think it's me. I'm more nervous than you are.

(Nina nods again)

I'm so happy for you. This is it.

NINA

Lawrence...

LAWRENCE

Yes?

NINA

I don't have any money.

LAWRENCE

No money? The check didn't come? I'm gonna kill accounting. What are they doing all day? Listen, here, take some cash.

(takes out wallet)

It must be the new contract that's slowing things down. You'll have money soon. Good money. Here take it.

NINA

Thanks.

Nina takes the CASH, stuffing it in her pocket.

INT. DRESSING ROOM -- NIGHT

The dressing room seems to be empty...

But then Nina exits the bathroom, wiping her mouth. She's already in costume and make-up.

There are a DOZEN WHITE ROSES on the counter. Nina smiles, takes out the CARD, reading it...

She looks a little disturbed, even frightened, as she puts it down. We move into the card... It reads: "HELP ME."

There is a KNOCK at her door. Salvatore pokes his head in.

SALVATORE

Five minutes, Miss Deneve. Good luck.

He closes the door. Nina looks at herself in the mirror.

NINA

I can do this. I can do this.

INT. THEATER -- MOMENTS LATER

AUDIENCE MEMBERS are taking their seats. The house is about half full.

INT. STAGE -- SAME

Spying from behind the curtain Nina spots LAWRENCE, moving to sit down next to the key players, SIMON and HARRISON.

Back behind the curtain, Nina is alone on the set. It's like she's walking through a temple as she takes this moment to absorb how blessed she is.

The MURMURS of the audience behind the great red curtain bring a smile to her face.

TIME CUT:

John is on stage. The performance has begun.

Nina emerges from the set door. Again she appears to be a completely different person. An extraordinary transformation into a confident performer.

She delivers her lines, intense and fluid. Lawrence turns and proudly smiles at Simon.

TIME CUT:

THE AUDIENCE seems to be enjoying the performance.

The energy is flowing between the performers. The key players are very pleased, sensing that the audience is absorbed.

From the very back of the theater WELLS opens the lobby doors and ushers in a guest--

It's THE DOUBLE.

The performance continues as Wells leads the Double down the far aisle...

Nina is in another world, delivering her lines.

The producer brings the Double to the front row, whispering introductions between the Double and the KEY PLAYERS.

Nina spots the Double taking a seat next to Mr. Wells...

John throws his lines at Nina--

But Nina's focus is completely broken. She looks expectantly to the key players, seeing if anyone notices anything wrong with this situation.

NO ONE SHOWS A SIGN OF SURPRISE.

John repeats his lines. Nina tries to speak, stuttering...

But her performance is shattered, stomach in her throat. She doesn't know where to focus her attention. John's eyes show desperation as the performance is completely falling apart.

The players suddenly realize something is going wrong on stage. The audience is fidgeting, waiting for Nina...

Nina is staring directly at her Double, who looks back with an expression that reveals nothing. Then an almost imperceptible smile grows on the Double's lips--

NINA COLLAPSES.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. DRESSING ROOM -- LATER

Nina awakes on the couch, surrounded by EVERYONE.

Nina sits up.

SIMON
Easy. Take it easy.

NINA
What happened?

LAWRENCE
You fainted.

SALVATORE
Here, drink some water.

KIM
She needs some Bourbon.

HARRISON
It's Brandy, not Bourbon.

NINA
I fainted?

LAWRENCE
Yes, honey. It's okay.

NINA
I fainted. Oh my God. I fainted. The
show- Oh my God. I'm so sorry. I-

In the back of the room, behind everyone, Nina sees the last
person that she wants to see... the Double.

SIMON
It's okay. Don't panic. It's just the
first preview. No big deal.

HARRISON
What do you mean, no big deal?

SIMON
Shut up, Harrison. This is not the time-
Nina struggles to speak, her throat bone dry.

NINA
(to the Double)
Who are you?

The Double shifts awkwardly as everyone turns to her. But
still, no one seems to notice that they are the same.

DOUBLE
Hello. I was invited...

WELLS
Nina, this is your new understudy.

NINA
Understudy?

WELLS
Yes, this is Nina Herbert.

NINA
(to Double)
What do you want?

DOUBLE
Me? I was invited. To see the show.

WELLS
Okay, everyone out. Nina needs to rest.
Give her some space. Let's go. Out.

Wells pushes everyone out of the room. Only Lawrence is left.
Nina turns to him, her eyes full of panic.

NINA
Who was that?

LAWRENCE
What do you mean, honey?

NINA
Her! Did you see her?!

LAWRENCE
Your understudy?

NINA
Yes! Her!

LAWRENCE
It is weird, isn't it? I mean, her being
named Nina is one thing. But Nina
Herbert. Quite a coincidence.

NINA
Coincidence? Didn't you see? She's me-
She's... It's not happening.

LAWRENCE
Nina, honey. You need to rest. I'm gonna
leave you here and I want you to-

NINA

Where did she come from?

LAWRENCE

I don't know. Wells hired her a few days ago. Says she's got a competent resume. I never heard of her.

NINA

Why doesn't anyone... why doesn't anyone see that she is like me.

LAWRENCE

Like you? She's nothing like you, sweetheart. Now, just lay down for awhile. I'm gonna lock the door so no one disturbs you. You just rest. And don't worry about the collapse. It's happened to the best of them. Okay? Don't worry. You'll be fine.

He locks the door from the inside and leaves. Left all alone, Nina can do nothing but stare at the floor in shock.

INT. BATHROOM, DRESSING ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Nina rummages through her bag. Finds her PRESCRIPTION BOTTLE.

Taps one PILL into her palm. One glance in the mirror makes her take out TWO OTHER PILLS. And as if this were her only hope, she takes THREE PILLS in one gulp.

She eases down onto the toilet, dizzied.

INT. BACKSTAGE -- MUCH LATER

Nina, in her street clothes, eases her way out of the dressing room, checking to see if the coast is clear. Everyone seems to be gone. She hurries out--

SIMON

How you feeling?

NINA

Oh. Mr. Connolly.

(pause)

I'm so sorry. I don't know what to say. I blew it.

SIMON

First of all, it's Simon, Nina. I hope we're friends too.

NINA

Of course. But I'm so sorry. I don't know what.. what to say. It's a nightmare. What happened was that... that this- I don't know where to start.

SIMON

Listen. You...

(takes her hand)

You mean a lot to me. Yeah, tonight was an unmitigated disaster. Nothing will change that. But it wasn't opening night. And we have another week ahead of us. We have to put this behind us. Tonight is erased from our minds. It didn't happen. Tomorrow is what counts. And the next day. Okay?

NINA

Yes. Thank you. I thought, maybe... you might fire me.

SIMON

Fire you? Nina, you're my star. The play is working beautifully and you've been doing spectacular work. We only need... we need to concentrate now on opening the play successfully.

He kisses her hand. A soft and sensual kiss.

NINA

Oh. I know we will.

He is looking deep in her eyes. She looks away, trying to hide the titillated smile that creeps up.

INT. BACKSTAGE -- MOMENTS LATER

Nina makes her way to the backstage door. She stops in her tracks when she hears LAUGHTER... Her own laughter.

She peeks around the wall to see the Double chatting with Salvatore. She seems to be friendly with him as she waves good-bye and leaves.

Nina scurries from her hiding place--

NINA

Salvatore. Who is she?

SALVATORE
Miss Deneve, are you feeling better?

NINA
Who is she?

SALVATORE
Who? Miss Herbert? Miss Herbert is...
Miss Herbert. What?

NINA
Isn't it unbelievable?

SALVATORE
I'm sorry. I don't understand what you're
saying. Isn't what unbelievable?

NINA
That she looks like me. *Exactly* like me.

Salvatore takes in this bizarre statement. Comparing...

SALVATORE
Now that you mention it, yeah. You know,
she does look like you. Huh.

NINA
See!

SALVATORE
Yeah, yeah. You're right. There is a
likeness going on there. A resemblance.
(pause)
So?

NINA
So, so... Did anyone else notice?

SALVATORE
No. Don't think so. Hardly noticed
myself. Only when you pointed it out-

NINA
How can they not see that she is
identical to me?!

SALVATORE
(laughing)
...A double.

NINA
What?

SALVATORE

(chucking)

Nothing, nothing. I was thinking about my aunt, on my mother's side... that poor, poor woman. Just before she died, she thought she was seeing her double. Like a ghost this thing was, because nobody could see it except my aunt. She was obsessed with this. Her double had come to deliver her fate she said. The poor woman had lost two husbands and then her son in the war. Yeah, she was never the same after my cousin died over-

NINA

I don't think she's a ghost.

SALVATORE

What?

NINA

Nina Herbert. We were talking about her.

SALVATORE

Oh, of course not. I didn't mean to imply that.

NINA

But what did she want? What were you talking about?

SALVATORE

Just chatting, you know. This and that. Oh, and she was curious about you, Miss Deneve. She was asking some questions about you.

CUT TO:

SUBWAY ROARING INTO STATION.

INT. 42ND STREET STATION -- LATER

The platform is crowded. People push and shove to get into the packed subway. Nina is forced to the front, next to the door that leads to the next car.

INT. SUBWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Nina surveys the FACES around her... Everyone seems to be in another galaxy, looking at no one and thinking nothing.

Nina turns away, gazing through the window. The next car is also teeming with people. The train slows to a stop... The doors open and some passengers get off--

THE DOUBLE is in the next car, seated at the far end. Nina can't believe her eyes.

More people come on, hiding the Double from sight. Nina is desperately trying to get a view of her, but her eye-line is obstructed.

The next car is swaying back and forth, Nina peering through the window. Finally someone moves--

The Double is no longer there.

INT. 125TH STREET STATION -- LATER

Nina gets off the train and heads for the exit, just wanting to get home and forget the terrible day when--

She spots the Double ahead of her. Also heading for the exit. Nina slows down, careful not to get too close.

EXT. SUBWAY ENTRANCE -- NIGHT

The Double comes up the stairs to the street. Quickly orientating herself, she turns the corner.

Nina, making sure it's safe to move on, trails the Double.

EXT. AMSTERDAM AVENUE -- NIGHT

The Double is walking like she knows exactly where she is going. Past all the neon lights of the shops that line the street, the Double strides along. And she's beautiful.

Nina, behind her at a good distance, follows. Dodging people, trying to remain hidden. A nightmare unfolding with such speed, draining the blood from her face as she realizes where the Double is going.

The Double turns on 128th street. Nina's street.

EXT. 128TH STREET -- NIGHT

The Double strolls up the street as Nina watches from the corner. She goes directly to Nina's building.

Nina carefully follows, approaching...

Someone BUZZES the Double in. She disappears into the lobby. Nina rushes up the steps and opens the outer door--

INT. LOBBY -- SAME

Takes only two steps before stopping dead in her tracks. The Double is at HER DOOR. She smiles warmly as Nina approaches.

DOUBLE

Hello. I just came to see you-

NINA

What are you doing here?

DOUBLE

Don't be afraid.

NINA

I'm not. Why you are here?

DOUBLE

I hope you don't mind. I was just going to... I thought that maybe I should introduce myself. Properly.

PARUSHKA opens the front door. The Double and Nina spin to face her at exactly the same time--

But Parushka doesn't even blink as she looks from the Double to Nina. She just wipes her hands on her apron.

PARUSHKA

Did you forget your keys again, Miss Nina?

(to Double)

Good evening. Come in. May I take your coat?

DOUBLE

Thank you very much.

The Double whispers to Nina as she is shown in.

DOUBLE

A servant. Wow, I'm impressed.

Nina is left at the door, gaping in disbelief. She reaches over and drops her bag... it HITS THE FLOOR. She had forgotten that the table was gone.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- SAME

Parushka sees the Double into the living room. Nina timidly enters behind them.

PARUSHKA
Shall I get dinner for two?

NINA
I-I... I don't know.

The Double smiles, nodding at the servant.

DOUBLE
That would be great. Thanks.

Parushka walks off, leaving them in an awkward silence as they exchange glances.

DOUBLE
Sorry if I bothered you by coming here. I
had to talk to you... I'm sorta
embarrassed.

Nina nods, and nods again, her eyes stuck on the Double.

NINA
Even Parushka... This is crazy.

Nina absentmindedly places her jacket on the arm of the couch, where it falls off. The Double quickly reaches down and hangs it up again, brushing off the dust.

NINA
Are you real?

The Double laughs, shrugging.

DOUBLE
I'm not sure what you mean.

NINA
Sometimes my dreams... they seem so real.
But they're just dreams.

The Double smiles, reaches over and PINCHES Nina. She lets out a SQUEAL, something between pleasure and pain.

NINA
Hey!

DOUBLE
Just to prove to you-

NINA
Okay, okay.

Nina grins as she plops down on the couch, for the first time not threatened by the Double.

NINA

So... Nina. This is very strange.

DOUBLE

Yeah, it is. Maybe I shouldn't have come, but I felt a connection to you, even though we didn't get a chance to talk. But I felt, I mean, I feel like you're-like you're- Maybe I should go.

NINA

No, stay. I'm sorry. Have a seat. If you want. Please.

(Double sits)

To be honest... It's like looking in a mirror. Kinda bizarre.

DOUBLE

I think the word is uncanny. Except you're much prettier than me.

NINA

Yeah, right.

DOUBLE

It's true. You are. I wouldn't lie.

NINA

And your name.

DOUBLE

We're namesakes. We're both Nina's.

NINA

(leans in)

Yeah, yeah, but that's not all... My real last name is Herbert.

DOUBLE

Shut up. You're joking.

NINA

My agent thought I should change it. So he came up with Deneve. Makes me sound foreign, or something. I was thinking of changing it again. To something else.

DOUBLE

Well, for what it's worth, I like it. I should change mine too. What the hell.

They laugh together, finally at ease with each other.

DOUBLE

So, you're not upset?

NINA

No. I've just been a little... on edge.

Nina realizes that Parushka is standing in the doorway, staring at her.

NINA

Yes, Parushka? What is it?

PARUSHKA

Dinner is served.

NINA

Thank you.

Parushka heads back to the kitchen.

DOUBLE

She always that quick?

NINA

Only when she wants to be. It must be a special occasion. Come on, right this way.

They both get up, side-by-side, walking in step.

INT. DINING ROOM -- SAME

The Double and Nina stand in the EMPTY dining room. The large table is gone. So are the chairs.

NINA

Oh. Um, I guess we're having dinner in the kitchen.

DOUBLE

I always liked kitchens better anyways.

INT. KITCHEN -- MOMENTS LATER

Parushka has served reheated lamb stew. Nina looks a bit embarrassed as the Double takes her first sips.

NINA

Parushka, don't we have some wine?

PARUSHKA

Wine?

NINA

Yes, wine. There must be a bottle around here. Get it.

Parushka shrugs and goes to the cabinet.

NINA

(to Double)

I'm sorry we don't have something... something different. But this is Parushka's speciality.

DOUBLE

(to Parushka)

This is great. What's that sweet taste?

PARUSHKA

Apples.

DOUBLE

Apples? Oh, it's excellent.

The servant is pleased by the compliment. She puts a BOTTLE of WINE on the table. There is only about a third left.

NINA

We must have more.

PARUSHKA

No. No more.

NINA

Well, could you go to the liquor store? We have a guest tonight.

PARUSHKA

And what money should I use to buy this wine?

NINA

(whispering)

How about the money that you got from selling the dining room set?

PARUSHKA

(whispering back)

That's all gone, Miss Nina. Bills.

Nina can't believe it. But she remains composed.

NINA

Fine. Here.

She digs out the crumpled CASH that her agent gave her.

NINA

Is that enough?

The servant nods and leaves. Nina grins at the Double, who returns the smile as she slurps her stew.

TIME CUT:

Their meal is done. Nina pours wine from a NEW BOTTLE. They take sips exactly at the same time, like mirror images.

DOUBLE

I want to thank you so much, Nina.

NINA

Thank me for what?

DOUBLE

Just thank you for not hating me.

NINA

Hate you? Why would I hate you?

DOUBLE

Sometimes... it's just that some people don't like me.

NINA

I like you.

(pause)

But I do have a confession.

DOUBLE

I think I know.

NINA

You do?

DOUBLE

Something about what happened tonight. On stage.

NINA

Well, it was like- I saw you and I got this chill down my spine. It was like- Like I thought I was... I was dead.

The Double chuckles. Nina can't help but join in the giggles.

DOUBLE

Oh, Nina. I just want to help you. Anyway I can.

NINA

Help me? I don't need help.

DOUBLE

Everyone needs help. Imagine. Us as partners. A team. What we could do together. All sorts of schemes. Plots against the plotters. Like sisters.

NINA

...like sisters.

DOUBLE

I'm going to learn so much from you.

NINA

Come on, I don't think so.

DOUBLE

And it'll be fun. We can rehearse together. And we can drink more wine.

The Double pours Nina another glass.

DOUBLE

This wine is good, huh? Are you buzzed?

NINA

Buzzed? Not at all.

DOUBLE

So am I.

They laugh together.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATER

An OLD TURNTABLE spins a RECORD by the marble fireplace. They're pretty 'looped, GIGGLING as Nina does a pirouette.

DOUBLE

This is really a great place. I love it. It's got such character. And it's huge. All this room to yourself...

NINA
I've lived here all my life.

DOUBLE
And your parents?

NINA
They're dead.

DOUBLE
No. I'm so sorry.

NINA
That was a long time ago. I was ten.

Nina realizes the Double is waiting for more...

NINA.
It was an accident.

DOUBLE
A car accident.

NINA
How did you know?

DOUBLE
I didn't. I just... you know.

Nina looks her over, not sure what to say.

DOUBLE
It must have been so hard on you. Do you miss them?

NINA
At the time... Yes. It was the afternoon of my first play. I was in a school upstate. In Westchester. And that afternoon was when they were coming to see me. And they didn't make it.

DOUBLE
I shouldn't have brought this up. I'm sorry.

NINA
No, no. That's all right. You get over things like that. I mean, it's hard and stuff. But you get over them. And- And Parushka was made my guardian, so she was in charge of the house and took care of me. Until I turned eighteen.

(MORE)

NINA (cont'd)
(changing the subject)
Hey, we need more music. What do you want
to listen to?

Nina goes over to stack of worn records.

DOUBLE
Don't you have a T.V?

NINA
No. I really should get one but I
haven't. Yet.
(puts on a record)
What do you think of our play?

DOUBLE
It's the best role I've ever had. I mean,
as understudy, of course. It's your role.

NINA
Met the writer yet?

DOUBLE
Harrison? Yeah. I met him.

NINA
He's a prick. A prick without a prick.
(giggles)
He doesn't like me.

DOUBLE
I'm glad you told me. You know, I was
going to ask him... but now that we're
friends- Let me ask you this. I've been
having trouble with one part. In the
third act. Do you know what I'm talking
about?

NINA
Yes! Of course. It doesn't work. I've
been working on it. By myself. Shhh,
don't tell anyone...

Nina, stumbling a bit, grabs the NOTES from the coffee table.

TIME CUT:

Nina paces until the Double finishes reading.

DOUBLE
That... Nina, that is... absolutely
perfect.

NINA

You think?

DOUBLE

That is exactly what she would do. That is what she would say. That is what she *should* say. I'm impressed. You really wrote this?

NINA

I did.

DOUBLE

It works. You have to give it to Harrison. Or at least to Simon. He's smart enough to recognize that what you wrote works. And he's cute...

Nina doesn't know how to respond, fidgeting.

NINA

I don't know. Maybe. I don't think it's *that* good.

DOUBLE

I think you should.

(gets up)

Well... gotta go. I had a great time. Thanks for having me-

NINA

You're leaving?

DOUBLE

It's late.

NINA

No way. I can't let you leave at this hour by yourself. You can't go out there, it's dangerous. Sleep on the sofa. You have to.

Nina's eyes are pleading and the Double gives in.

DOUBLE

Okay. If it's not an inconvenience.

NINA

Not at all. I'll get you some blankets.

She goes to the closet in the adjourning room.

DOUBLE (O.S)

You know, you're right. There's a lot of crazy people out there. Look what happened to Marie.

NINA

Marie? You know her?

DOUBLE (O.S)

No, I don't. But I heard... It's unbelievable.

Nina returns, blanket and pillow in hand, and starts making a make-shift bed on the sofa.

NINA

I know. Everyone's been a bit nervous and jumpy since that happened.

The Double starts undressing.

DOUBLE

Yeah, I can imagine.

Nina places her REWRITE PAGES in the pages of a BOOK. The Double is having trouble unhooking the back of her blouse.

DOUBLE

Can you give me a hand?

Nina tugs until it opens. Somehow the DOUBLE'S HAND has ended up on NINA'S HAND...

DOUBLE

Thanks again, Nina. For everything.

NINA

Sure. Good night...

Stepping away as the Double undresses, Nina seems fascinated at the Double's beauty and grace.

The Double doesn't seem to mind undressing in front of Nina, she may even enjoy it. Nina averts her eyes and leaves.

INT. NINA'S BEDROOM -- VERY LATE

Sitting in the dark, Nina is wide awake, swaying slightly on the edge of her bed.

She sneaks out of her room, tiptoes down the dark hallway.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- SAME

In the living room doorway, Nina watches the Double sleep.

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP of NINA. Staring in confusion--

INT. LIVING ROOM -- MORNING

THE DOUBLE IS GONE.

As if she was never there, the blankets and pillows are missing. A CLANK is heard. Nina rushes to find--

INT. KITCHEN -- SAME

Parushka is preparing coffee.

PARUSHKA

Good morning, Miss Nina. Did you have fun last night? All that racket...

NINA

Uh huh.

PARUSHKA

Good. I'm glad.

NINA

But where is she? Where did she go?

Parushka squints at Nina, rubs her eyes and goes back to pouring coffee.

PARUSHKA

Who?

NINA

My friend.

PARUSHKA

What friend? You don't have friends, Miss Nina.

NINA

Whatever. But last night... I had a friend over. A guest. Remember?

Parushka looks at Nina again, nods her head.

PARUSHKA

Yes. Okay. Her.

NINA

Where is she?

PARUSHKA

How should I know.

NINA

She slept here. On the couch.

PARUSHKA

Did she?

Parushka drags her feet out of the kitchen, Nina following.

NINA

She did. I made a bed for her.

PARUSHKA

Well, she's not here now, is she? She must have left early. You'll clean this mess later, won't you? I'm getting old...

Nina stops by the sofa as Parushka shuffles off. No sign that the Double was there. She bends down to the COFFEE TABLE. The book is there, but--

The REWRITE PAGES are GONE.

Nina shoots up, searching in agitation. Under the coffee table, under the sofa... but they're nowhere to be found.

Then she becomes aware that the GRANDFATHER CLOCK has stopped ticking, it's glass case slightly ajar.

She peeks in... THE KNIFE is still there. Relieved, Nina taps the pendulum... TICK, TOCK, TICK, TOCK...

INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

Nina nervously crushes FIVE BLUE PILLS into powder at the kitchen table.

Somehow this is providing comfort to her, her nerves are on end as the BUTTER KNIFE she is using cuts the white powder into one line that she scoops into a GLASS OF WATER.

She drinks up as if she was dying of thirst.

CLOSE on her HAND, gripping the butter knife.

Her head thrown back, eyes closed. A BRIGHT LIGHT fades up, falling on her face, calming her...

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP on BRIGHT STAGE LIGHT.

INT. STAGE, THEATER -- THAT NIGHT

Nina is on stage, PERFORMING. Again, it's as if we are in another world. This is Nina's world, smooth and flowing.

Curiously, we cannot hear one word she is saying, as if the sound is turned off. Nina says something and spins away, we go into a CLOSE UP of her EYES...

The CURTAIN CLOSSES. There is THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE.

THE OTHER ACTORS step onto stage, congratulating each other. It was quite a performance.

The curtain opens... THE AUDIENCE is going crazy. Clapping and whistling as the actors take their bows.

Then NINA STEPS FORWARD. The theater erupts in CHEERS. Nina is whirling as the applause seems to never end.

INT. BACKSTAGE AREA -- MOMENTS LATER

The actors tear backstage, excited chatter as they are met by the crew, congratulations going around.

Nina seems to have a thousand hands on her, with kisses and hugs. Wells welcomes Nina with open arms.

INT. DRESSING ROOM -- LATER -- MONTAGE

Nina enters her dressing room, deflating.

We are watching a sad ritual as the velvet dress comes off.

The make-up is slowly wiped off, followed by cold cream.

Then the hair is reluctantly let down...

Back to being plain Nina. She stands in front of the mirror. Her hand moves down to her stomach--

There is a SECOND CUT now, near the older one. This one is fresh, still a little bloody. Nina seems to be confused as she examines it, unsure how she got it.

There is a KNOCK on the door. Nina quickly covers herself as Salvatore pokes his head in.

SALVATORE

That was divine, Miss Deneve. Simply divine.

NINA

...I don't know how I did it.

SALVATORE

Well, you did it. And when you're ready, Simon wants to see you. He's in the front office.

NINA

Okay. Thanks.

Salvatore leaves, revealing DETECTIVE CHAVEZ in the doorway. He walks in and extends his hand.

CHAVEZ

I caught the last part there. Great stuff. I was impressed. Detective Chavez. We met at the hospital.

NINA

Yes, of course. I remember. How are you?

CHAVEZ

Fine, thanks. Do you have a moment?

Nina just nods, trying not to swallow.

INT. THEATER -- MOMENTS LATER

They walk up the center aisle, the theater deserted.

CHAVEZ

Something you might have heard, seen maybe. Since the last time we talked. Something that might have slipped your mind.

NINA

Slipped my mind? No. I don't think so.

CHAVEZ

Could be small. Maybe seem insignificant. Anything about Marie that might have seemed strange, unusual. Not just behavior, but who she was hanging around with.

NINA

No. Nothing. Do you think that maybe-
that maybe it was someone... someone in
the company?

CHAVEZ

I don't want to go into all the forensic
details. We're still investigating. But I
can tell you that you shouldn't be
concerned or anything. You don't have a
security issue.

NINA

But.. what if they come back?

CHAVEZ

They? Who's they?

NINA

I mean, whoever did this.

The detective looks her over.

CHAVEZ

You seem very convinced that it was
someone that did this to Marie.

NINA

I- I guess I don't know.

CHAVEZ

I understand. It somehow makes it more
tolerable, even acceptable, than the
alternative.

They have reached the lobby doors. Chavez shakes Nina's hand.

NINA

Oh. Is that it?

CHAVEZ

Yes. Unless you think of anything, that's
it. Good luck with the show. And I really
thought you were good.

NINA

Good-bye. Thank you.

Nina heads through the lobby doors.

INT. LOBBY -- SAME

Nina is making her way to the office when she hears LAUGHTER. The Double is chatting with some members of the CAST.

Nina approaches them. As she gets really close the conversation is cut off. But not before she hears--

DOUBLE

-bitch.

Nina clears her throat. The Double turns, a nasty look on her face that throws Nina.

NINA

Uh, hi. How are you?

DOUBLE

(imitating)

Uh, hi. How are you?

Nina is taken back by the animosity. The Double seems to suddenly recognize Nina, as if she hadn't before.

DOUBLE

Oh, it's you, Nina! You, you, you.

NINA

Yes, it's me.

DOUBLE

How did you sleep?

NINA

What?

DOUBLE

Last night. How did you sleep?

NINA

It almost seemed like a dream this morning. Like it didn't happen.

DOUBLE

Two naughty girls, getting drunk like that. I'm going to have to be more careful around you.

Simon waves at Nina from the front office.

NINA

Simon's calling me.

DOUBLE

Yep, there's a surprise waiting for you... Go on, you'll see.

NINA

Okay, okay. Hey, maybe I'll see you later, right?

DOUBLE

Yeah, maybe.

Nina goes to the office.

INT. FRONT OFFICE -- SAME

The office is crowded with posters of previous productions. To her surprise Simon hugs her.

SIMON

You really shined tonight. From the moment you stepped on you had them. And you never let them go. I was really proud of you.

He pulls away. HARRISON is slouched in the corner chair.

SIMON

We're in business, Nina. After the other night, well, we were worried. But, shit, you proved that this show is yours.

NINA

It felt good...

SIMON

But we wanted to talk to you about a few things. We've noticed that you have been taking some liberties. With the script.

HARRISON

You've been improvising.

SIMON

Hey, I think we're all excited about your exploration. And I don't think we can object to that, can we Harrison? But, concerning these...

He picks up NINA'S REWRITE PAGES off the desk and hands them to her. Nina is in shock as she shifts through them.

SIMON

Your understudy. Herbert. She brought these to me. She told me about your request for...

HARRISON

For some changes.

NINA

These are- You see, yesterday, I mean, last night, I gave-

SIMON

It's okay. Yesterday was yesterday. We talked about this. Forget it. You did great tonight. We are both very confident about you. It's just, how can I say this?

HARRISON

You can't change the play.

INT. LOBBY -- SAME

Nina exits the office in a daze, rewrites in hand. Catching sight of the Double across the lobby, Nina heads her way--

Simon suddenly pulls Nina's aside.

SIMON

Listen, Nina, don't take that in the wrong way. He's just protective about his play, that all.

NINA

I understand. I didn't mean to cause any problems.

SIMON

Of course not.

Nina is glaring at the Double, wanting to get to her. But she has to get away from her director first.

SIMON

I like what you did. I really do. We just have to more political about how to implement them. Technically we can't change one word without Harrison's approval. But I think these ideas of yours are great... Did you hear me?

NINA

Yes. Great. Thank you.

SIMON

Why don't we go grab some dinner, talk over these ideas of yours.

(whispers)

And how we can get them past Harrison.

NINA

I can't. Not right now.

SIMON

Come on. Why not? Let's go. You're always so mysterious. Never going out with us-

Nina is pulling away, eyes still on her understudy. The Double sees her and knows she better get out of there.

NINA

I'm really sorry, just not right now.

SIMON

I'm beginning to think you're avoiding me.

NINA

I'm not, Simon. I'm not. I wish... we could. I just have to... Excuse me. Sorry.

Nina crosses the lobby, her rage growing. The Double hurries out the door. Nina follows--

EXT. SIDEWALK, THEATER -- NIGHT

Nina manages to grab Herbert by her coat.

DOUBLE

Nina. It's you again.

NINA

What- Why- I can't believe you would do that-

DOUBLE

Do what?

NINA

Do what? Do what?!

(waves rewrite pages)

These were mine.

DOUBLE
Oh, those. Yeah.

NINA
How could you? I thought we were friends.

DOUBLE
There must some misunderstanding-

NINA
No, no. No misunderstanding. You stole these. And you had no right to take them to Simon!

DOUBLE
But I was just trying to help you, Nina.

NINA
Help me? You stabbed me in the back. You were pretending to be a friend. But all the time you were- you were wearing a mask.

DOUBLE
A mask? What are you talking about?

NINA
Masks. People wear masks. You can never see who they really are. I don't wear anything. That's just the way I am. And I let you in. I let you stay at my home. I shared things with you. But now I see who you are.

DOUBLE
Ohhh, and who am I?

NINA
Why would you do this to me? Why?

DOUBLE
I gave them to him because I knew you wouldn't have the guts to do it yourself. I thought they would appreciate what a good job you had done. I guess they didn't go for it.

NINA
No, they didn't! And you put me in a terrible position.

DOUBLE

Obviously they didn't understand it.
That's not my fault. And obviously you
don't understand what I was trying to do.
And you know what? That's your problem. I
thought I was helping you. But I guess
you don't want help, you don't want to be
friends... screw you.

Nina realizes she may have overreacted.

NINA

I'm sorry. I-I-I-

DOUBLE

(imitating)

I-I-I- Here, let me just put my mask back
on. There. See who I am?

NINA

I didn't mean to- to be so hard. I-

DOUBLE

You know, it saddens me. It's clear you
and I could never be friends, no matter
what we have in common. You're incapable
of trusting anyone. Get out of my way-

The Double breaks away and hails a CAB.

NINA

Wait!

The Double jumps into the cab. Nina rushes to the window.

NINA

I said I was sorry.

DOUBLE

You want to be enemies? Fine. Enemies it
is.

The Double flips her off as the cab drives off, leaving Nina
on the sidewalk, stunned. Then she senses something...

Inside the lobby, the Detective is looking her way. Nina
tries to act as if nothing is wrong, but his eyes are on her.

INT. SUBWAY -- LATER

Nina has her head against the window of the subway car,
watching the darkness interrupted by streaks of light.

She notices a WOMAN sitting opposite her. Strangely, this woman has a similar appearance to Nina. Sitting a few seats away is ANOTHER WOMAN, also has a physical likeness to Nina.

Even farther down the car, ANOTHER WOMAN with uncanny resemblance to Nina...

Unnerved, Nina reaches into her bag and pulls out her PRESCRIPTION BOTTLE. Her hand is shaking. One, two... six pills. Nina tries for more--

ALL THE PILLS spill out, overflowing to the floor.

THE WOMEN look up as the pills roll around the subway floor. Nina left with the empty prescription bottle in hand.

EXT. AMSTERDAM AVENUE -- NIGHT

Nina strolls down the avenue, distant and distracted--

A SIREN grows and grows, DEAFENING as a COP CAR roars by.

EXT. 128TH STREET -- NIGHT

Nina bounds up the steps to her building.

INT. LOBBY, NINA'S DOOR -- SAME

She enters the lobby, keys ready as she stops at her door--

On the door are the words "DO SOMETHING." Nina tries to erase it, rubbing... But its been carved in by a sharp object.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Nina takes THE KNIFE out of the GRANDFATHER CLOCK. Unwraps the newspaper... What is she supposed to do with it?

She holds the knife, thinking, and begins to pace. Back and forth... back and forth again...

FADE TO:

INT. NINA'S ROOM -- DAY

Nina lies in bed, clothes still on. Not having gone to sleep. Somewhere in the house a PHONE is RINGING AND RINGING. Finally it stops.

NINA
(under her breath)
What does she want? What does she want?

Parushka comes into her room.

PARUSHKA

It's past noon, Miss Nina. Do you wish to sleep all day?

NINA

I'm not sleeping.

PARUSHKA

Someone just called for you.

NINA

Who?

PARUSHKA

Someone from that theater. They said the preview has been pushed, whatever that means. They said they will start at eight today.

Parushka opens the curtain. Daylight blinds Nina.

PARUSHKA

What's wrong with you?

NINA

Shut the curtain, Parushka.

PARUSHKA

I'll make you some breakfast.

NINA

I'm not hungry.

PARUSHKA

Fine. Have some tea then.

(sits on bed)

Do you have a fever?

NINA

No, I'm fine.

PARUSHKA

You don't look fine, Miss Nina. I think you have a fever. Yes, you're hot.

NINA

I said I was fine.

PARUSHKA

So, you're not sick? Is that what you're saying? Not sick.

(MORE)

PARUSHKA (cont'd)

(pause)

Miss Nina... You have to learn to start taking care of yourself. This is no good, the way you've been acting.

NINA

What are you talking about?

PARUSHKA

Poor Miss Nina. What will you do when I leave? What will you do when I'm gone?

NINA

Are you being morbid now?

PARUSHKA

It's true, that's all. Someday I will no longer be here.

NINA

What do I care.

Parushka takes in the insult, breathing it out.

NINA

I'm sorry. I didn't mean that, Parushka.

PARUSHKA

You must take care of yourself. First step is to get out of bed.

(gets up)

You cannot stay in bed all day anymore, Miss Nina. It's not healthy. And when that time comes, you must get out of bed everyday. To survive. All your parents money is gone now.

Something makes Nina sit up.

NINA

(to herself)

She thinks she can beat me.

PARUSHKA

Are you listening, Miss Nina?

NINA

Yeah, yeah. I'll survive. I'll have that tea now. Please. Thank you.

As soon as Parushka exits Nina gets out of bed. We move in to find THE KNIFE lying in between the sheets.

INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

Nina sips her tea and shifts through the MAIL. Mostly bills, except one ENVELOPE catches her eye. It's from her Agency. She opens it... It's her CHECK. Finally.

EXT. NINA'S BUILDING -- DAY

A shiny black TOWNCAR pulls up in front of the building. Nina, who was waiting in the window, disappears back inside.

EXT. STEPS OF NINA'S BUILDING -- DAY

Wearing sunglasses, she subtly checks to see if anyone is around. The DRIVER, a gaunt man in a black suit and tie, is just getting out of the car.

DRIVER

Did you order a car?

NINA

Yeah, it's for me.

The driver holds the car door open as she slips inside.

NINA

First I need to go to the bank.

DRIVER

Sure thing.

He closes the door.

EXT. BANK OF NEW YORK -- DAY -- MONTAGE

The Towncar pulls up right in front of the bank. Nina waits until the driver circles the car and opens the door for her.

Check in hand, Nina strolls into the bank.

EXT. TOWNCAR -- MONTAGE

The driver is reading a book while waiting outside a Madison Avenue beauty salon.

INT. BEAUTY SALON -- MONTAGE

Nina is paying the HAIRDRESSER. She's got a NEW HAIRSTYLE. Short and very straight.

EXT. MADISON AVENUE -- MONTAGE

Nina trots out, getting back into the Towncar.

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP of NINA.

INT. FITTING ROOM -- LATER

Looking at herself in a mirror, Nina is pleased with what the OUTFIT has done for her new-fashioned look. Very stylish.

But something catches her eye--

NINA
Wha-? Not again.

On her arm is ANOTHER CUT. Grimaces as she touches it, no idea how she got it.

INT. COUNTER, CLOTHING BOUTIQUE -- AFTERNOON

Nina wears a NEW OUTFIT with long sleeves that hides her cut. A SALESWOMAN rings up the large selection of clothes as Nina digs into her bag, looking for her wallet.

Inside Nina's bag is THE KNIFE. She closes it up just as the saleswoman looks up.

SALESWOMAN
How will you be paying?

Staring at the total, \$1,674, Nina can't help but giggle.

NINA
Cash.

SALESWOMAN
Cash?

NINA
Actually... Maybe I should put all those on hold. I'll be back to pay. Tomorrow.

SALESWOMAN
And the outfit you are wearing?

NINA
Oh, yes. How much is this?

SALESWOMAN

Two hundred forty seven. Plus tax.

Nina digs into her purse, counting out the bills.

EXT. CLOTHING BOUTIQUE, 57TH STREET -- AFTERNOON

The driver again holds the door for Nina.

NINA

Thank you- What's your name?

DRIVER

Freddie Fitzgerald. Fitz, ma'am.

NINA

That's so cute. Fitz.

She gets in, hiding behind the tinted window.

INT. TOWNCAR -- NIGHT

Nina is leaning forward as they drive up 46th street.

NINA

Slow down. Slow down.

They creep up to the theater. Nina is anxiously peering out, ready to show off. But there is no one out in front.

NINA

Where is everyone?

She starts getting out of the car.

FITZ

Ma'am?

NINA

Yes? Oh, yes. Please wait for me.

EXT. ALLEY, BACKSTAGE ENTRANCE -- SAME

As she heads up the alley to the backstage door a growing feeling of alarm is taking over.

The backstage door is locked. She knocks. Salvatore opens up.

INT. BACKSTAGE AREA -- SAME

Nina can read by Salvatore's confused look that her worst fear has happened.

NINA
It started?

SALVATORE
Of course. On time. At six.

NINA
But I thought... I got a call. They said
two hours later tonight.

SALVATORE
Who? Who called you?

Nina knows exactly what must have happened.

NINA
Her... They are using her.

SALVATORE
Yes, I thought that was you on stage, but
then I guess they are using the other
one. The understudy.

Nina rushes to the curtain. She peeks through. And sure
enough, the Double is on stage. Nina bites her lip in anger.

SALVATORE
Are you okay, Miss Deneve?

NINA
No, no, no. It was her. She tricked me,
Salvatore. Tricked me and I fell for it.

She paces, accidentally knocking over a LIGHT STAND.
Salvatore manages to catch it, saving a loud crash.

SALVATORE
Please-

NINA
Evil bitch. Don't you see? No one sees-
sees what she is doing. Everyone has gone
crazy!

SALVATORE
Miss Deneve. Please. Be quiet.

NINA
That's what she thinks. That I'll just be
quiet. Let her run over me. Take my part.
My part-
(grabs him by the arm)
Salvatore.

SALVATORE
Yes, Miss Deneve.

NINA
I need your help. Help me fight her.

SALVATORE
Fight? No, I-

NINA
That's it. Here.

She starts digging out cash, putting crumpled bundles in Salvatore's reluctant hands.

NINA
Now you tell me when anything happens.

SALVATORE
When what happens?

NINA
Anything that that she does. Anything.
Everything. Find out what you can. She
thinks she might get away with this, but
she won't. Here, you want some more?

Salvatore pushes the money back at her.

SALVATORE
No, please. It's not necessary, Miss
Deneve. I'll let you know... when
something happens.

NINA
You're an angel.

INT. THEATER -- MOMENTS LATER

An AUDIENCE is watching the performance. Nina is practically crawling in shame as she makes her way down the far aisle.

Simon barely turns around as she sits behind him. Wringing her hands, she leans forward.

NINA
Simon, I'm so sorry.
(he doesn't respond)
I got a call and I was told that we were
starting later. It was her. She-

SIMON

Shhh.

Nina leans back, devastated by his cut off.

The Double is performing very well. She definitely knows the part. Nina sinks in her chair, amazed at the treachery.

INT. LOBBY -- NIGHT

APPLAUSE is heard as Nina paces the lobby. Harrison enters.

NINA

Harrison. Oh my god, Harrison.

(runs up to him)

Listen. It wasn't my fault. She- Nina.
Nina Herbert. She lied. Told me it was
later- She's trying to take over. I mean,
I think it's clear, she's up to
something.

He hesitates for a moment before heading away from Nina.

NINA

It wasn't my fault.

HARRISON

I wish I could believe that. But as a
"prick without a prick" it's very
difficult for me to give a shit. Know
what I mean?

He spins away and is gone. Nina looks like she just got
punched in the stomach. More APPLAUSE from the theater--

PEOPLE suddenly come through the lobby doors, pushing Nina
into a corner. Audience members file out, praising the
Double's performance.

Nina's expression goes from bad to worse.

INT. DRESSING ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

The Double is calmly removing her make-up.

DOUBLE

Stunning haircut... And that outfit. All
new Nina. You go.

(pause)

So, are you going to say something, or
just sit there.

She shifts her look in the mirror to Nina, who is sitting on the back couch. Nina doesn't respond, eyes blazing.

DOUBLE

You can't blame me. It was probably that maid... I wouldn't trust that woman.

NINA

You're going to pretend that you don't know anything about it?! That I just happen to be late and you just happen to go on?

DOUBLE

Well, think of it this way: my job is to go on if for some reason you can't. Which you couldn't. So I did. Hey, did you get a chance to catch the performance? I'd be very appreciative to any suggestions... criticism.

NINA

Are we going to play games, is that it?!

Nina has grabbed the Double's shoulder, who slowly turns, eyes burning through Nina until she lets go. The Double goes back to removing her base.

NINA

I see what you are. I don't know why it took me so long. But I finally see and I won't let you- I'll expose you. I will.

DOUBLE

I think you're a bit unstable right now. You're not making any sense. "Expose" me? Expose me to what?

NINA

To them. They'll see what you are.

The Double lets her hair down and turns to look at Nina.

DOUBLE

And what am I that you are not, Nina? Huh? Then I have to "expose" you. Have you thought about that yet? No, I bet you hadn't gotten around to that thought yet.

NINA

I have nothing to hide.

The Double laughs, standing eye to eye with Nina.

DOUBLE

But Nina, I know what you've done. And what you're doing, and maybe even what you'll do.

NINA

You know nothing about me!

DOUBLE

Look at me. Look at yourself. And you think I know nothing about you? Come on. I know lots. For example... What's in that bag that you carry everywhere?

NINA

Nothing.

The Double tries to grab the bag, but Nina pulls back.

DOUBLE

I know what you've been doing.

NINA

I haven't done anything.

DOUBLE

It's curious, don't you think, to carry a knife around? A kitchen knife.

(Nina doesn't respond)

That knife you sleep with. That knife that gives you relief.

NINA

You're crazy. You're really crazy.

DOUBLE

That's such a nasty thing to say.

The Double walks away, slipping out of her costume.

DOUBLE

Do you think that Marie was cursed?

NINA

What?

DOUBLE

No, I don't think so either. I don't think she did what people said she did. I think someone did it to her. And I may know who it was... I have a theory. Tell

(MORE)

DOUBLE (cont'd)
me what you think. Maybe, just maybe,
that's the same knife that cut Marie up.

Nina shrinks with a chill down her spine.

NINA
...You.

DOUBLE
In fact, I would bet your life it's the
same knife. With your fingerprints on it.

NINA
You've been setting me up.

DOUBLE
Just be happy I haven't gone to the
police and told them what I know.

Nina is floored, paralyzed in a horrified panic.

NINA
Why are you doing this? What do you want?

DOUBLE
You know, sometimes when you get that
feeling, that feeling you have right now,
I feel sorry for you. It's a terrible
feeling, isn't it? It's too much for you
to handle, too much is against you, you
can never achieve what you desire, you'll
never pull it off, you don't have the
strength. And just like that, pow, you
can't breathe. And you're afraid...

NINA
What do you want?!

DOUBLE
Don't be so dense. I want this, Nina.
This. Did you really believe that you
deserved this role?

NINA
Yes, I did.

DOUBLE
You're supposed to say I do. I DO!
Everything you do is weak. You think that
when you get on stage and do your little
pretend games that everyone is fooled.
That you can make them believe that you
aren't some pathetic little snail. But
(MORE)

DOUBLE (cont'd)
 you're just spineless. You want the
 limelight so bad. Can't stand it taken
 away. Well, it's gone. It's mine now.

The Double takes a step toward her. Nina backs up.

NINA
 You can't- I won't- let you...

DOUBLE
 That's it. Try to defend yourself. Come
 on, do something. For Christ sake-
 (taking steps to her)
 Do something! DO SOMETHING!

Nina tumbles back, fleeing out of the dressing room.

EXT. BAR -- NIGHT

Through the front window of the bar we see the CAST and CREW,
 having a great time as they drink it up. This includes
 Harrison, John, Simon, and, holding everyone's attention with
 a gripping story, is the Double.

INT. TOWNCAR -- NIGHT

Parked directly in front of the bar, Nina is staring at the
 party going on without her.

NINA
 Have you ever had an enemy? I mean, a
 real enemy.

The driver puts down his book.

FITZ
 I don't know anything about that.

NINA
 She really hates me. Despises me. She
 wants to destroy me.
 (pause)
 I don't understand why.

FITZ
 Is that so?

NINA
 I think she would hurt me.

FITZ
 There's that saying about, uh, being
 careful who you chose as your enemies.

NINA

But I didn't choose her. She chose me.

(points at the bar)

There, look, Fitz. All those people,
they're like under her spell. Look, look.
She's a snake.

Fitz reluctantly leans forward and looks out the passenger window. The Double is barely visible in the crowded bar.

FITZ

There is a lot of people in there. I
can't really tell-

NINA

There, there. You can't miss her. She
looks just like me. Identical, that
bitch. That whore. Look, she's hanging
all over Simon.

The Double is, in fact, all over Simon. Fitz can't really seem to make sense of all the people in the window.

FITZ

(lying)

Yeah, I see.

NINA

She's after my life, Fitz. After my life.

Fitz just looks at her in the rear view mirror.

NINA

What's she doing now? I can't see her-
Wait here, Fitz. I'll be back.

She gets out.

EXT. TOWNCAR, STREET -- SAME

Making sure no one sees her, she takes THE KNIFE from her bag and drops it into a DRAIN.

INT. BAR -- NIGHT

Nina is at the end of the bar, sipping a glass of wine. Through the CROWD she is watching the Double. Sickened as Simon and the understudy flirt, hands all over each other.

Nina decides she better go. Puts a five dollar bill on the bar, making eye contact with the BARTENDER. Turns to leave--

BARTENDER

Wait a sec. Yours comes to twenty-five.

NINA

Are you speaking to me?

BARTENDER

Yes, you. Twenty-five.

NINA

But- I had one glass.

BARTENDER

I counted five. You drink 'em, you pay for 'em.

NINA

There must be a mistake...

Behind the bartender, at the other end of the bar, the Double finishes off her drink. She winks, raises her glass in a salute and taking Simon's arm, she vanishes to the exit.

BARTENDER

There's no mistake. Nothing's free here.

Nina digs into her purse, flinging some money on the bar. She works herself free of the crowd and rushes out the door.

EXT. TOWNCAR -- NIGHT

The Towncar is crawling along, no faster than 5 mph.

FITZ

Is this legal?

NINA

Look at her. I can't believe it.

In front of them, half a block away, is the Double in the arms of Simon. Unaware that they are being followed.

FITZ

...I don't know.

NINA

Stop the car.

Nina leans forward, eyes flaring... They're KISSING.

Simon then holds the door open to his building. Just as the Double goes in she seems to look directly at the parked Towncar. Nina falls back to the seat.

FITZ

She saw us.

NINA

I don't care.

They sit there in silence for a moment.

FITZ

Is that it? It's been twelve hours. I'm sorry, but I wasn't aware that you would need the car for so long. I could've made arrangements, but-

NINA

No, no. That's fine, Fitz. Just one more place and I'll give you your money.

She starts counting her thinned out wad of bills.

INT. BELLEVUE HOSPITAL -- NIGHT

The ICU is dead quiet as Nina comes out of the elevators.

She goes to the deserted nurse station. A NURSE is in the back, but Nina decides not to call her, sneaking past...

Down the hallway, Nina's heels click uncomfortably loud as she gets to ROOM 1515.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- SAME

The room is dark. MARIE is in the same state of catatonia, face all bandaged up. And the BEEPS are still there.

Nina closes the door and it gets even darker. Tip-toes to the bed, sitting down as if to not disturb the patient.

NINA

I hope you don't mind-

Marie's head is tilted to the side, away from Nina. Her FORCED BREATHS coming from tubes.

Nina just sits there, not knowing if this was the best idea.

NINA

I think I know who did this to you.

Nina can't believe that she's talking to someone in a coma. Rubs her eyes in frustration and sits back, giving up.

NINA

It's very weird. Very weird things are happening and... and I don't know...

(pause)

I just wish you could tell me what to do.

But Marie has nothing to say.

NINA

But I won't give up, okay? I'll find a way. We'll get her, I promise. She won't get away with this.

Nina reaches out and lays her hand on Marie's arm.

CLOSE UP of MARIE

Her head masked in darkness, unsettling in its stillness. Then, ever so slowly, her head starts turning. Rotating toward us... light from the hallway hits her--

We can see that her eyes are still closed.

But Nina has left. We hear the DOOR CLOSE as the room returns to darkness.

FADE TO:

INT. NINA'S ROOM -- MORNING

Nina is curled up in the middle of the floor, the morning light falling on her.

There is a KNOCK at her door. She lifts her head.

PARUSHKA

What did you do, Miss Nina? What did you do now?! Get up, get up. The police are here.

Nina sits up with a start.

PARUSHKA

Yes, yes. The Police. Should I let them in, Miss Nina? What did you do?

NINA

Nothing, Parushka. I'm sure everything is just fine. Calm down.

CUT TO:

Nina opens the front door to find DETECTIVE CHAVEZ.

CHAVEZ
Good morning. Did I wake you?

NINA
No, I was awake.

Chavez inspects the "DO SOMETHING" carved into Nina's door.

NINA
That... That's- Kids, I guess.

CHAVEZ
Mmm. Punks. You have a package.

NINA
Excuse me?

He points to the ground. Next to the doorway is a PACKAGE. Wrapped in newspaper, just like the first one. Nina knows exactly what it is, though she tries not to show it.

NINA
Oh, of course. I was expecting this.
(picks it up)
Come in. If you want.

He nods. She shows him in, her face trying to hide the shock of reading a note on the package. It reads: YOU DID IT.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- SAME

Nina stuffs the package in her bag without opening it. The detective looks around the apartment, a few more pieces of furniture missing.

CHAVEZ
Moving?

NINA
No. I'm, uh, thinking of redecorating.
How can I help you?

CHAVEZ
Well, I received a complaint this morning. It seems that your understudy, Nina Herbert...

NINA
Yes...

CHAVEZ

Right. She says you attempted to assault her yesterday.

NINA

What?! Me?! I-I-I-

Nina can sense his eyes prying into her. She seems to turn to stone, as if to not let him into her thoughts.

NINA

I don't know anything about this. It's a lie. I would never- She's a lying bitch.

CHAVEZ

I see. There's some animosity between you two.

NINA

No. Not on my part.

CHAVEZ

So, you didn't attempt to assault her.

NINA

No, of course not. That's ridiculous.

CHAVEZ

Says you pulled a knife on her.

NINA

A knife? No, no. I would never... Detective, you have to believe me. I wouldn't do that. She's- she's a liar and uh, doesn't like me. I think she's... not well. She's even threatened me. I didn't do anything.

Nina is very aware that the detective is near her BAG. She's trying not to give it away as he steps around it.

CHAVEZ

You know, I can understand the stress, the competitiveness of your business. Arguments that get out of control, and such. She hasn't pressed charges and since there was nothing more than alleged threats I thought I should talk to you. To avoid anything official. You understand?

(Nina nods)

Do you have this knife around here?

NINA
No, no. I don't have any knives.

CHAVEZ
No knives.

NINA
No. None. I mean, in the kitchen of course. But I told you, I didn't try anything with a knife. Or anything else.

CHAVEZ
I would hope not. And I would hope that you wouldn't lie to me.

NINA
Oh, I wouldn't do that.

She forces a smile as we move into her BAG.

EXT. ALLEY, BACKSTAGE ENTRANCE -- DAY

Nina, bag over her shoulder, KNOCKS on the backstage door.

The hollow bangs go unanswered. She knocks again. Finally Salvatore speaks through the door.

SALVATORE (O.S)
Yeah? Who is it?

NINA
It's me, Salvatore. Nina.

SALVATORE (O.S)
Oh, hello, Miss Herbert.

He opens up...

NINA
No, no. It's me. Nina Deneve.

SALVATORE
Excuse me. My mistake.

NINA
That's okay. Listen, I need Nina Herbert's address.

SALVATORE
Huh. I don't know if I have it.

NINA

Of course you do. Everyone's address and phone number is in there, by the phone. On the wall.

SALVATORE

No, I don't think so.

NINA

I'm sure it is. I'll just take a second.

She makes a move to enter, but Salvatore has blocked her way.

SALVATORE

I'm afraid that's impossible, Miss Deneve. I'm sorry. There are orders. I have to follow them, you understand.

She's stunned, the situation finally sinking in.

NINA

Salvatore...

SALVATORE

I'm really, really sorry.

(leans in to Nina)

Look, I know she's probably behind all this. Your rival... you know who I mean. But there's nothing I can do. Orders are you cannot enter.

NINA

(forces a laugh)

I get it. You're playing a joke on me. Ha, ha. Very good. I fell for it.

He shakes his head, closing the door behind him to make sure no one can hear.

SALVATORE

I tried to call you last night, Miss Deneve. But your phone is disconnected or something. I couldn't get through. I had, uh, news, you know.

NINA

Why? Why would they do this?

SALVATORE

That report. Harrison has that report. Your rival... you know who I mean-

NINA

Of course, of course. But what report?

SALVATORE

The medical report.

NINA

You mean my bill of health?

SALVATORE

Yeah, those. You see, she gave those papers to Harrison. He was very upset.

NINA

But that's impossible. They were being sent directly to Mr. Wells. She couldn't have gotten them.

SALVATORE

Well, she did. And Harrison started the whole thing. I'm telling you, he was very upset, raving on about... all sorts of things. About you. He took the papers to Mr. Wells and then I tried to call you.

NINA

I don't get it. It's just my bill of health. The doctor said I was fine, and that's it. They lock me out for what? It doesn't make sense. We're opening tonight and they cancel the show?

SALVATORE

The show is still opening.

NINA

What do you mean? Without me? They can't possibly-

SALVATORE

...with her.

NINA

With her?!

Nina grabs her stomach in a sudden twinge of pain, slouching over as Salvatore reaches out.

NINA

They're using her. They're using her.

SALVATORE
Miss Deneve, are you all right?

NINA
Yes, yes. Fine. FUCK!

SALVATORE
What is it?

NINA
Nothing. Nothing... Please, Salvatore. I need to get her address. I need to set things straight. Please.

He nods once. Quietly sneaks back inside. Nina breathes hard, regaining her composure. Lifts her shirt--

ANOTHER CUT. Deeper than the rest. Fresh BLOOD is trickling down her stomach. Nina mumbles confused curses as she looks around... and finds a DIRTY NAPKIN on the ground.

She presses it to her wound, then covers herself with her shirt and jacket. Salvatore comes back out, PAPER in hand.

NINA
Thanks, Salvatore. You've been a friend.

SALVATORE
Take care of yourself.

He's heading back inside--

NINA
Wait, wait. This is my address.

SALVATORE
That's what I have for Miss Herbert. I have to go now.

He closes the door on her. Nina crumples up the paper, tossing it aside.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE BUILDING -- DAY

Nina walks up to a side door where several golden plates announce the presence of medical offices.

INT. DOCTOR TAYLOR'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

FLORENCE, the receptionist, has a confused look on her face.

FLORENCE

Are you sure you're okay? You look a little pale.

NINA

I can't believe you did that. Why would you do that? That is a breech... a complete disregard for- Do you even realize what you've done?

A few PATIENTS in the waiting room discreetly look up, sensing that something is about to go down.

FLORENCE

You asked me to mail them...

NINA

That's right. Mail them.

FLORENCE

But then you came and asked for them. I gave them to you.

NINA

No you didn't! You gave them to *her*, not me. How could you mistake her for me?!

FLORENCE

Please lower your voice. No need to get excited.

NINA

I'm sorry. Of course. No need to get excited. We're calm. You've completely DESTROYED MY LIFE WITH YOUR STUPIDITY, BUT I'M CALM!

Doctor Taylor appears behind Florence.

DR. TAYLOR

What's going on in here?

FLORENCE

It's Nina, Doctor Taylor.

NINA

Yes, it's me.

DR. TAYLOR

How can I help you, Nina?

NINA
I want my bill of health.

DR. TAYLOR
Didn't we dispatch those already?
(Florence nods)
Yes, Nina, we sent those to your employer already.

NINA
No, you didn't. She messed up. She gave them away to a total stranger that comes up and says she's me, but isn't me, though she wants to be me, and now she's using it against me... against me-

Nina realizes she must sound crazy. She tries to calm down.

DR. TAYLOR
Florence?

FLORENCE
I gave them to her two days ago. To her.

DR. TAYLOR
Okay. Let's start over. What's the problem?

NINA
The problem is that I trusted you, Doctor. I trusted you. Please, just give me a copy. I need to see what you wrote. We open tonight and they don't want me because you- What did you write?

The Doctor looks at Nina. Very carefully.

DR. TAYLOR
You look a little drained. Have you been sleeping? Have you been taking your pills?

NINA
What did you write?

DR. TAYLOR
Nina, I think it's best if you come back in here. Let me take a look at you.

NINA
No. That's not necessary. Just tell me what you wrote.

DR. TAYLOR

Of course it's not necessary, but I've known you for many, many years. And you can trust me. Whatever you're feeling right now... you must know that you can trust me. After all we've been through. Remember when you always asked for two lollipops? Always wanted two, not one...

Nina takes a step back, her coat opens... Doctor Taylor can see the BLOOD STAINS.

DR. TAYLOR

Nina. What happened?

But she's gone, slamming the door behind her.

CUT TO:

Nina is reflected in what appears to be a GIGANTIC MIRROR.

EXT. 6TH AVENUE BUILDING -- DAY

In front of her Agency's building, Nina is trying to look presentable. Fixing her hair. Adjusting her coat so everything is hidden. But she still looks haggard.

INT. AGENCY LOBBY -- DAY

Nina exits the elevator and barrels past the RECEPTIONIST.

INT. AGENCY HALLS -- SAME

Nina marches past all the cubicles with ASSISTANTS. She reaches the corner cubicle and startles DAVID, Lawrence's assistant. He rips off his headset.

DAVID

Wha- How did you get in-

NINA

I need to see Lawrence. Now.

DAVID

He's not in. You should have called. He's at a meeting and we're very busy-

LAWRENCE opens the door to his office. His eyes widen--

NINA

Lawrence, thank God-

THE DOUBLE steps up behind Lawrence, looking as good as ever.

DOUBLE

Nina, what a surprise to see you here.
Well, I must be going.

(kisses Lawrence on the cheek)
Lawrence, baby. I'll see you soon. Bye,
bye, David.

DAVID

(enamored)

I promise to get you those papers by
tomorrow.

DOUBLE

You promised...

She starts heading out, Nina steps up and blocks her way.

NINA

What are you doing here?

DOUBLE

I hate to see you let go of yourself like
this-

NINA

He's my agent. And he's not going to let
you get away with this- this fake medical
papers stuff. If you think you are going
to open tonight... he'll make sure you
don't.

DOUBLE

He will? But that seems to be against his
interests, since he's *my* agent now.

She pushes past Nina with a sly grin and sweet good-bye wave
for Lawrence.

LAWRENCE

Bye, bye, sweetheart.

Nina slowly turns to Lawrence.

LAWRENCE

I'm representing her, yes.

NINA

But- But do you know what she's done to
me? She's an imposter. She done's
everything, from the very beginning, to
to make sure that she got the role. She's

(MORE)

NINA (cont'd)
cheated, she's lied. You can't take her,
that's a- a conflict of interest.

LAWRENCE
There's no conflict in interest. You're
no longer my client.

NINA
What?!

Lawrence just shrugs, as if to say "sorry." Heads back into
his office. Nina follows.

NINA
No, no. You can't. You have to help me.
Lawrence. Don't let her get away with
this. Please. Why? Everything was going
so well-

LAWRENCE
Was. Was going well. Look at you. You
look terrible. You've been fainting on
stage. You've been late for shows.

NINA
That wasn't my-

LAWRENCE
Two hours late! That's unacceptable. You
really believe that they're going to open
a show with you being so irresponsible.
And then acting like some nut. Trying to
rewrite your part. Acting like some
eccentric diva.

NINA
Lawrence, I don't know what they've told
you but-

LAWRENCE
How humiliated do you think I was when
Henry Wells called me... and I have
represented you honestly and to my full
capacity and I have to hear from him how
you've grossly misrepresented yourself. I
was simply confounded. I had to hear from
him.

Tears are coming to Nina's eyes.

NINA
What did he say?

LAWRENCE

Misrepresentation! That's what he said. Everyone knows that you are not who you say you are. I could've been sued if they thought I knew beforehand. But- Stop crying. You blew it. You. No one else but you. You can't go blaming anyone else.

NINA

You won't help me?

LAWRENCE

How can I help you? You are no longer represented by this agency. It's over. You have to leave now.

He means it. Anger shoots through Nina.

NINA

I'LL SUE YOU! YOU WON'T GET AWAY WITH THIS! NONE OF YOU!

Lawrence doesn't seem fazed at all.

LAWRENCE

I guess you can try.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIXTH AVENUE BUILDING -- DAY

As soon as she takes a few breathes of fresh air her rage dissolves away... to overwhelming hopelessness.

BUSINESS PEOPLE pass her as she slides down the side of the building's gigantic pillars, crying.

VOICE (O.S)

How can I help you?

Nina looks up to find THE DOUBLE. It takes her a second, trying to speak, swallowing her sobs.

DOUBLE

Yes? Tell me...

NINA

You... Bitch.

DOUBLE

Oh, no. You think... No. You blame me? You think it's my fault?

NINA

Yes... It's you. I... have dreams. I have dreams. I won't let- You can't-

DOUBLE

It wasn't me that destroyed these dreams.

NINA

I'm going to tell everyone. Tell the police. You attacked Marie. I know it was you. You're trying to frame me.

DOUBLE

Yes, yes. Great idea. Tell them. But do you think they'll believe you?

Nina stares into the Double's eyes. No longer crying, she stands up and takes THE KNIFE out of her bag.

NINA

I have this.

DOUBLE

Ohhh, yes you do. With your hands all over it...

Nina lowers the knife, keeping it out of sight.

DOUBLE

Listen, Nina, I understand why you're upset. If anyone knows what you're going through, it's me. Believe me. I feel for you. But I've thought all about this and it comes down to a real simple fact... You're second rate. Second rate and you know it. You're a fake. You don't deserve to be out there. I represent that undeniable fact to you and therefore you can't control your anger towards me.

(pause)

There, I said it. I think you know what I'm talking about, right?

Nina isn't buying it.

NINA

No... This isn't over. I'll get you.

DOUBLE

There is only one way of "get" me, Nina. But you're too afraid.

NINA
Not that afraid.

The knife is pointed at the Double as Nina gets closer.

DOUBLE
It's a real fear... having to face
yourself, having to face your fate. And
it's stronger than your will. You can't
do anything about it.

NINA
I won't let you win.

DOUBLE
But it'd be easier if you did.

The knife presses against the Double, but she doesn't flinch.

DOUBLE
Okay. I sense that you need some time
alone. Beside, I gotta go. Have to get
ready for the show. Ciao.

She spins, gone around the pillar. Knife raised, Nina goes
after her--

The Double takes a turn around the other side of the pillar.
Nina chases. Then the next corner. Nina follows--

And she's where she started. But there is no Double. All she
can hear is distant LAUGHTER.

She lowers the knife, a tear falling...

INT. LOBBY, LUXURY BUILDING -- AFTERNOON

Nina wipes the tear away as she waits behind a lobby desk. A
short DOORMAN has his back to Nina, whispering into a phone.
He hangs up...

DOORMAN
I'm sorry. Mr. Wells is not in. You can
leave a message.

NINA
No, no, no. I need to see him. It's
urgent. An emergency.

DOORMAN
But he isn't in.

NINA
When is he getting back?

DOORMAN
Why don't you leave a message...

NINA
He told me to come here. He said he would be here. We were supposed to have a meeting. A very important meeting.

The doorman knows she's lying.

NINA
It's a life or death matter. You are interfering in a life or death matter.

She stares him down. But he won't budge.

NINA
Then I'll wait.

Walking away from the desk, she begins pacing at the other end of the lobby. The doorman goes on with his business...

CUT TO:

Nina is seated on a marble bench. Still waiting. She is immobile. We move in...

From under her coat sleeve BLOOD trickles down to her limp hand to DRIP... DRIP... DRIP on the floor.

The doorman is nervously watching her. Fidgeting... Finally he can't take it anymore. He picks up the phone.

He has a hushed conversation and quickly hangs up. Nina hasn't so much as blinked.

WELLS (O.S)
What happened?

INT. WELLS' PENTHOUSE -- AFTERNOON

Mr. Wells is kneeling in front of Nina, a damp towel in his hand, wiping away blood.

WELLS
This is bad.

NINA
It's nothing.

Dangerously close to her wrist is a NASTY CUT.

NINA

I'm sorry for bothering you like this, Mr. Wells. I'm so embarrassed to have to come to your home.

WELLS

It's okay, Nina. It's okay. This may need stitches. Now, tell me. What happened?

NINA

It was an accident. But it's fine. Thank you, thank you.

She takes his hand, holding it tight.

NINA

I had to come talk you and explain. I don't know what you think... What made you change your mind about me. But you have to know, you've made a mistake. I mean, you've just misunderstood the situation. It's her. It's Nina Herbert. She's behind this misunderstanding. Because that's what it is, a misunderstanding.

Mr. Wells is extremely sympathetic, nodding.

WELLS

I see. I see what you mean. I may have rushed to judgment. We should have discussed this.

NINA

Yes. Thank you. That's why I, uh, sorta burst in here. Acting a little weird.

She laughs awkwardly. He just keeps nodding.

NINA

It's hard to believe, it sounds crazy and I admit I may not have been acting like myself lately, but- I'm here to tell you that- that it's all lies. It's her. You have to believe me. She's set me up.

WELLS

Yes, of course. I see.

NINA

Oh, thank you, Mr. Wells. I knew you would see....

Wells manages to free his hand. He gets up and walks away. Nina follows him with her expectant eyes--

HARRISON is there, manila envelope in hand.

HARRISON

So, Nina Herbert.

NINA

Yeah, her.

HARRISON

But you are Nina Herbert. It says right here, in black and white. Your name is Nina Herbert.

NINA

That's my real name. But I meant the other one.

HARRISON

The other one.

NINA

Please. I know that maybe you... you don't like me. But you have to listen to what I'm telling you. It's her--

HARRISON

A mutual friend was concerned enough to give this medical file to us. And we were illuminated to a, uh, situation. A situation which we were not aware of. That you somehow neglected to tell us.

NINA

I'm not sure what that says. But- I mean, there's no doubt. It's a fake, totally false. The other Nina has been doing everything to betray me. Whatever that says, it was her--

WELLS

Nina, you have a condition. And it's very serious.

NINA

That's ridiculous.

(pause)

(MORE)

NINA (cont'd)

What? What does it say?

HARRISON

I think you know what we're talking about. Nina Herbert has had this condition for quite a while. Has even been on medication.

NINA

Well, yeah, I take medication for my allergies. That's all. My doctor can-

HARRISON

You knew that you were putting the entire company and the fate of the production in jeopardy by not letting us know.

NINA

What does it say?

HARRISON

Do you know what schizophrenia is?

NINA

Yes. But-

HARRISON

It's when what is in here...

(points to his head)

...doesn't match with what's out there.

WELLS

Harrison. Easy.

Nina is starting to cry. But they are defiant tears.

NINA

You don't believe me.

WELLS

Relax. Both of you, relax.

NINA

It's not true. It's not me. It's not me.

HARRISON

The other Nina has nothing to do with your problems. She's innocent-

NINA

Innocent?! She's evil! She's capable of anything. Anything. I know she is-

The intercom BUZZES. Wells picks up the phone.

WELLS

Yes, send him up.
(to Harrison)
He's here.

HARRISON

Good.

Nina desperately pulls up her sleeve, showing the NEW WOUND.

NINA

She did this to me! Look! This is what she's capable of! She did this! She did it to Marie and she's trying to do it to me.

Suddenly the men are very quiet, not moving.

WELLS

What did you say?

NINA

Marie. She attacked her. That was her. She did that. I have the proof. I have the knife. See, see what I mean. She's dangerous. Very dangerous.

Rushes over to her bag and pulls out THE KNIFE. Holds it up.

NINA

She even confessed. She told me she did it. And here. Here is the proof.

The elevator doors open. Nina spins, knife out--

DR. TAYLOR steps out and freezes. They all just stand there. Nina, shocked to see her doctor, is not lowering the knife.

NINA

What are you doing here?

DR. TAYLOR

Everything's fine, Nina. There's nothing to worry about.

WELLS

(nervous)

We're just concerned, that's all.
Everyone loves you, Nina. Don't we?

NINA
You think I'm crazy. That I made
everything up.

WELLS
No, of course not. We just thought it was
better if... if... Doctor?

Doctor and Wells are taking small steps toward her. Harrison
crosses his arms, enjoying this.

DR. TAYLOR
There's nothing to worry about, Nina.

NINA
Stop saying that. Nobody believes me.

HARRISON
(sarcastic)
We believe you.

WELLS
Yes, we do. Nobody is going to hurt you.
Right, Doctor?

They are descending onto her.

DR. TAYLOR
That's right. Nina knows we just want to
help her. We'll help her through this.

HARRISON
Yeah, you'll only get five to ten in a
federal prison.

Nina jerks to this. The knife swinging--

NINA
What's that supposed to mean?

WELLS
...Harrison...

HARRISON
That's, if Marie lives. She dies, you
get thirty to life.

NINA
You've gotten it all wrong! You think
that I-

She takes a step forward, they take a step back.

WELLS

No! No. Of course not. We don't believe-

DR. TAYLOR

That's right, we don't.

NINA

(to Doctor)

You don't even know what they're talking about!

HARRISON

Well, Doctor, our little friend here, with those puppy eyes of hers, has just admitted that she slashed up the lead-

NINA

I did not! Why would I do something like that?! NO!

HARRISON

We'll see what the police think.

NINA

You bastard! You know I didn't fucking say that! I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING!

She makes her way to the elevator, keeping her terrorized eyes glued on them.

WELLS

We know you didn't. We know that. We know it was the- the other Nina.

(pause)

Harrison, maybe you can let us handle this. Go and get Nina a drink. Don't you want something to drink, Nina?

Holding the knife out to keep them at bay, she presses the elevator button--

DR. TAYLOR

Let's just talk about this. Your pills. Have you been-

NINA

Stop with the pills! I took them! All of them!

The doors open--

DR. TAYLOR
All of them?! Nina, no-

Nina has backed herself into the elevator.

DR. TAYLOR
I'm coming with you.

NINA
NO!

The doors close, shutting out the doctor.

CUT TO:

A DOOR SWINGS OPEN.

INT. NINA'S APARTMENT -- DUSK

Nina darts inside. She has been running for awhile. Gasping for air, she triple locks her doors. Finally, she is safe. Turns on the light--

Immediately struck by the emptiness of the parlor. Every piece of furniture is gone. She goes to

THE LIVING ROOM

Even the grandfather clock is gone. Only scattered remnants left... Books, pictures, one chair. She rushes to

THE DINING ROOM

Empty. Someone just came in and took everything.

THE KITCHEN

Table and chairs have vanished. Just a few pots left.

NINA
Parushka!

THE HALLWAY

Runs to the servant's room. Opens the door--

It's also completely empty.

NINA
Parushka! Where are you?!

PARENT'S ROOM

Only some clothes and personal items remain. Nina can't believe that her home is wiped out.

NINA
PARUSHKA!

She slowly heads to her room, afraid to open the door. But she has to and...

It seems that her room is the only one left intact. On her bed is an ENVELOPE. She opens it to find a NOTE and MONEY.

NINA
(reading)
I cannot take this anymore. I went home to my family. Here is some money. Parushka.

There is only about FIFTY DOLLARS. Nina just drops it on the floor, dumbfounded.

She catches sight of herself in the mirror. Nina stares, a grin rising out of the devastation. She starts GIGGLING.

And soon crumbles to HYSTERICAL LAUGHTER. She can't stop.

FADE TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

The room is almost pitch black. It seems to be empty. But then we see the shadow of movement...

Nina is crouched in the corner. In her hand, THE KNIFE. With tears in her eyes, she scratches her forearm with the blade. And is HUMMING under her breath as we move in...

CLOSE UP of NINA, grimacing in pain.

Suddenly LOUD KNOCKS paralyze her. Motionless, she waits...

VOICE (O.S)
Nina! You in there?! Nina!

MORE LOUD KNOCKS.

INT. FRONT DOOR -- SAME

Now they are more like BANGS.

CHAVEZ (O.S)
Nina?! It's Detective Chavez. I need to speak with you. Open up! Nina!

Then it is silent.

CUT TO:

THROUGH THE PEEPHOLE: No one is there.

EXT. LOBBY, NINA'S BUILDING -- NIGHT

Nina's door creeps open. She peers out, making sure the coast is clear.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE -- NIGHT

A fevered movement of LIGHTS AND PEOPLE, all going full speed. From the CROWD emerges Nina...

She seems to be the only person in the world.

EXT. ROYALTON THEATER -- NIGHT

The theater looks much more glamorous, the marquee brightly announcing "Last Night Nightingale."

In the shadows across the street is Nina. Watching as PEOPLE gather outside. A limousine pulls up...

She makes up her mind. Hunching a bit, concealing her face with her hair, she heads across the street...

The opening night crowd is buzzing. Nina cuts through the black ties trying to remain inconspicuous, but having trouble as she bumps into a MAN, who gives her a rude "excuse me."

She uses a FAT WOMAN to block her from the view to the box office. And then quickly slips through the lobby doors as a GENTLEMAN holds it open for his date.

INT. THEATER LOBBY -- SAME

The crowd is even worse inside. Nina maneuvers through the chaotic scene. At the three center doors USHERS collect tickets. Nina goes to the stairs that lead to the balcony...

To the telephones beneath the stairs. She picks one up, pretending to be making a call. Waits, watching the door nearest her that is unguarded.

At her feet is an open box filled with PROGRAMS. She picks one up just as SOMEONE comes out of the rest room. Nina turns so they can't see her.

Then the door opens, an USHER going to get more programs. She makes her move as the door is closing, barely catching it.

INT. THEATER -- SAME

The theater is much quieter as people are taking their seats. But Nina is on the wrong side of the theater. On the opposite side there is a DOOR just off-stage.

She puts her head down and heads up the top aisle, right for the entering crowd and ushers...

An USHER has noticed Nina. She quickly opens her program, pretending to be reading. The usher raises his flashlight--

The usher gets caught by an ELDERLY COUPLE, wanting to know where their seats are. Nina scoots by them, she's in the clear... when something stops her in her tracks.

It's a LEAFLET in the program announcing that NINA HERBERT will be playing the lead tonight. Nina can't control herself, ripping it up ferociously--

Then freezes. DETECTIVE CHAVEZ is talking to an USHER at the far aisle. Nina spins away. She has no choice but to go down the center aisle...

Picks up her pace, nervously glancing behind her. Chavez doesn't see her as she reaches the front row.

She keeps her head down until she finally gets to the DOOR which is half hidden by a curtain. Opens it and slips in.

INT. STAIRWELL -- SAME

Takes a breath. And heads up the stairs to another door...

INT. BACKSTAGE -- SAME

She's made it. She hesitates when hit by the hectic energy of everyone getting ready, the anticipation palatable.

Nina barely avoids CREW MEMBERS that dash past her. Keeps her head down as she finds herself in the middle of things, whirling...

SALVATORE spots this person and cranes his neck to see who it is. But Nina has already scurried past him.

INT. REAR OF BACKSTAGE -- MOMENTS LATER

It's quiet way back here, where all the LIGHTING EQUIPMENT and PROPS are kept.

In the far corner we see TWO FIGURES, intertwined, making out. It's THE DOUBLE and SIMON.

The Double moaning to the slow kisses that cover her neck. Simon's hands moving to her breasts...

On the far wall behind the lovers are rows of OLD FLATS. We move toward them and into the darkness between them--

There is NINA, hiding. Crouched down and intently watching the action. She is NAKED--

For the first time we see the extent of her OPEN WOUNDS. On her stomach, arms, and legs. As if a terrible disease is eating her up. A grisly indication of how far gone Nina is.

In her hand she clutches THE KNIFE, eyes fixed on the Double as she makes out with Simon. Filled with revulsion and scorn for her enemy.

But there is also pain. A sad, unbearable pain...

Nina has moved the BLADE to her HAND. Doesn't seem to be aware of it as it SLICES HER PALM, drawing blood...

CUT TO:

The DRESSING ROOM DOOR.

A CRY from inside. Seconds later, the Double bursts out.

DOUBLE
Kim! Goddamnit, KIM!

KIM nervously rushes over.

DOUBLE
Where's my costume?!

KIM
On the rack. In there-

DOUBLE
No, it's not!

Wells appears, holding out his hands to calm the Double. They have a discussion. Wells sends Kim away.

CUT TO:

Lurking in the darkness of her narrow hiding place, Nina is watching the scene. She is now wearing the RED VELVET DRESS.

CUT BACK TO:

The frantic Kim returns, ANOTHER DRESS in hand.

DOUBLE
It better fit.

The Double disappears into the dressing room, Kim in tow.
Wells shakes his head and walks away.

CUT TO:

INT. STAGE -- MOMENTS LATER

The BUZZ of an AUDIENCE on the other side of the curtain.

CUT TO:

EXTREME CLOSE UP of a BLADE CUTTING SKIN.

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP of the CHANDELIER. It flashes.

INT. THEATER -- MOMENTS LATER

Every seat is taken in the theater. The audience settles in.
All conversation dies as the lights fade...

Silence. The CURTAIN RISES. And the play begins--

INT. REAR OF BACKSTAGE -- SAME

Nina comes out of her hiding place. A frightening sight. Some
of the self-inflicted wounds visible. In her possessed eyes
we see that she is like a wounded animal... very dangerous.

Holding the knife at her side, walking with deliberate steps,
the knife's point keeps catching the dress, ripping it apart.

Making her way toward the stage. Passing the dressing room,
Kim gasps, startled. Nina doesn't see her. Keeps going...

Spotted by CREW MEMBERS, who are so shocked at her appearance
that all they do is stand out of her way. Nina pays no
attention to the stares and WHISPERS that follow her.

She approaches the set... a clear view of her entrance point.

Stops for a moment, all alone behind the set, the VOICES from
the performance heard as if in a tunnel. Then--

A HAND ON HER SHOULDER.

Nina recoils, spinning to find THE DOUBLE. She looks stunning, poised and ready.

We see something new in Nina's eyes: fear. The Double smiles and gently, almost lovingly, touches some of Nina's wounds.

DOUBLE

Hope out of reach, madness in the heart,
devouring itself...

NINA

Just leave.

DOUBLE

You and I, you and I. It could be a romantic story, if you think of it that way. Without the other neither has a past or a future. Their death is your death. Tied together by heart and soul. Sisters.

NINA

We were never sisters.

DOUBLE

Forgive me, Nina. Forgive me for your pain. I was just trying to help you. Just showing you the way. Destiny is not an easy thing to feel when it's closing in on you.

NINA

It's time you left me alone.

DOUBLE

You're not listening to me. There are certain things you can't change, no matter what you do. That is what destiny means. You follow me and you follow Marie.

NINA

You won't do this to me.

DOUBLE

What you did to Marie, you did to yourself.

NINA

No!

Nina suddenly STABS the Double. Swift, decisive thrust of the knife at the Double's mid-section.

Then they look at each other, eye to eye.

CLOSE UP of DOUBLE. She's calm, stoical.

CLOSE UP of NINA. Contorted rage slipping away--

As Nina realizes that the KNIFE is stuck in HER STOMACH. She sways a bit, in complete disbelief that she stabbed herself.

The Double holds her elbow, gently helping Nina to keep her balance as she falters a bit. BLOOD spreading...

Nina falls against the back set wall.

NINA

...No...

DOUBLE

Yes. It's the way it was meant to be.
Listen, Nina. Listen...

The performance is going on. Nearing the cue...

DOUBLE

It's almost time.

Nina stares at her Double and then at the SET DOOR. It takes all her strength to pull the knife out of her stomach.

DOUBLE

And it's too late. Good-bye, Nina Marie.

CUE. The Double sweeps open the door to the STAGE--

It's so bright, welcoming. She seems to keep the door open so Nina can see her defeat...

Then, ever so slowly, closes it.

Left alone behind the set, Nina holds her stomach, hand drenched in blood.

Something is climaxing in Nina's mind, something shooting through her limbs as she struggles to walk...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THEATER -- LATER -- MONTAGE

The AUDIENCE rises in a standing ovation.

The CURTAIN drops down.

INT. BACKSTAGE -- SAME -- MONTAGE

Everyone is excited. Opening night couldn't have gone better. Tight hugs and slaps on the back.

There are PEOPLE all over, wanting to congratulate SIMON.

A PHOTOGRAPHER snaps pictures, HARRISON trying to position himself so he appears in the shot.

EXT. ROYALTON THEATER -- LATER -- MONTAGE

WELLS, walking off, accepts congratulations from friends.

INT. THEATER LOBBY -- LATER -- MONTAGE

A CLEANING WOMAN vacuums the lobby carpet.

INT. THEATER -- LATER -- MONTAGE

The vacant theater lies before us. It seems abnormally quiet now that everyone is gone.

CLICK. The chandelier is turned off.

We move down the center aisle, repeating the same sequence that opened the film, but instead of following a shadow we trail SALVATORE.

He flips a switch and the house goes to complete darkness.

INT. BACKSTAGE AREA -- SAME

He keeps turning off lights as he goes. CLICK. The stage lights goes off. He too momentary disappears with each light that is turned off, but soon is back...

Down the hallways, bringing darkness to the theater.

INT. DRESSING ROOM -- SAME

Salvatore enters the dressing room. The florescent light in the BATHROOM flickering...

His face goes from curious to alarmed as he approaches. There is BLOOD on the floor... Salvatore moves closer, shock taking hold as he sees--

NINA lying there. BLOOD all over her face.

She's almost unrecognizable. HER FACE looks like an animal attacked her. A horrifying mask of mutilation.

Salvatore is nauseated as he rushes to get help.

We move in and hold on the gruesome fate of Nina. She's still alive, wanting to say something. Her lips mouthing words...

PZZZ. The bathroom light burns itself out.

Over black, a SIREN is growing closer and closer...

FADE TO:

EXT. BELLEVUE HOSPITAL -- DAY

An AMBULANCE pulls into the E.R, shutting off its siren.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR -- DAY

DETECTIVE CHAVEZ sits outside a room. He puts down his paper when the DOCTOR exits the room, joining him.

DOCTOR

I don't think you're going to get much out of her. Not now anyway.

CHAVEZ

She awake?

DOCTOR

She's awake. But still not responding well. She hasn't said anything.

CHAVEZ

You're going to move her to psychiatric?

DOCTOR

Eventually. She's got to stabilize first. She'll be fine here for now. She can't hurt herself. Besides, she's so far out of it...

(opens door to room)

I'd be surprised if she even knows her name.

They go in. ~

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- SAME

We realize we're in a room identical to Marie's. It might even be the same room. Chavez steps toward the bed--

And there is a BANDAGED NINA. With identical bandages, we realize that Nina has become Marie. There is no difference.

She is also catatonic, eyes fixed on the ceiling.

DOCTOR

Just speak softly to her. Try not to get her excited.

The doctor motions to the NURSE. They leave the detective alone with Nina.

He sits down, looking her over. Noticing the restraints on her arms, Chavez lays a hand on her shoulder.

CHAVEZ

Hello, Nina. My name is Detective Chavez. I know this is hard for you, but I need your help.

Nina slowly turns her head to face Chavez, eyes glossed over.

CHAVEZ

Can you tell me what happened?

Nina struggles to speak with her short breaths.

NINA

...Marie... It's... Marie...

Chavez then notices the I.D. BRACELET on her wrist. It reads: NINA MARIE HERBERT.

CHAVEZ

Okay... Marie. Can you tell me why... why this happened?

Nina labors to shake her head.

NINA

...It's... It's...

CHAVEZ

Yes?

NINA

It's... not... me...

CHAVEZ

Was there someone else?

NINA

...It was...

CHAVEZ

It's okay, take your time.

NINA

It was... It was... a dream.

CHAVEZ

What's that?

NINA

A dream... happening...

(deep breath)

Happening again. Please... Stop it.

Please. Don't let it... happen... again.

Don't... sleep...

She's used up all her energy, her eyes closing.

Chavez sighs at the delirious and useless information. He won't be able to get anything else, she's passed out.

He gets up and walks out.

TIME CUT:

We hold on Nina as she just lies there, sleeping. The rhythmic BEEPS sounding so far away...

Then a WOMAN'S HUMMING fades in. A distant, sweet lullaby. Nina is waking up again, blinking her eyes--

Desperately trying to focus on something, eyes moving in every direction...

She finally seems to register what is going on when she sees that a HAND is on her hand.

Her eyes look up. Instantly going wide--

ANOTHER NINA is sitting next to the hospital bed.

It's the Nina from the beginning, an awkward smile as she tries to make contact with the patient.

ANOTHER NINA

Hi, it's me. Nina. Nina Deneve. Remember me?

The patient starts to SCREAM--

But they are muted cries. NO SOUND comes out as she keeps screaming... and screaming...

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR -- SAME

In SLOW MOTION the DOCTOR and NURSE come rushing down the hallway and into the room.

The door closes behind them.

And we FREEZE FRAME on... ROOM 1515.

FADE OUT.

THE END